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THE CASTE SYSTEM OF NORTHERN INDIA

With special reference to the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh

By

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PREFACE

When I was superintendent of the census operations of 1911 in the United Provinces, one of my duties was to make investigation into certain specific aspects of the caste system I accordingly collected books that dealt with this subject, but quickly discovered that though there was a considerable quantity of literature available, its nature was such as to make study of that subject difficult There were firstly numerous books in several languages which related to the origins of caste, and were mostly designed either to prove or to disprove some theory of that origin Secondly, there were numerous discussions on particular caste problems scattered through the various census reports or in such books as Risley's *People of India*, or in the introduction to such works as Crooke's *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*. Thirdly, there were brief accounts of the caste system in various encyclopaedias, or in such general works on India as Fuller's *Empire of India*, or Crooke's *Natives of Northern India* Fourthly, there was much relevant material in ethnographical books such as Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, Fraser's *Totemism and Exogamy*, and Hartland's *Primitive Paternity*. Finally, there were caste dictionaries, of which Crooke's *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, already mentioned, is a typical example, for every important caste it gives the fullest possible information regarding its history, divisions, manners, customs, ceremonies, and occupations But there was not then and, so far as I am aware, is not yet, any book which gives a full and connected account of caste as a system, which describes the factors which brought caste into existence, the evolution of the present system, the nature of the customs common to all castes, the principles which underlie those customs, and the reasons for similarity or difference between caste and caste And my object in writing this book is, to the best of my ability, to supply that want.

In a sense this book is a sort of synopsis of Crooke s work for my description of a particular custom is based on collection and collation of the material to be found in Crooke s accounts of the castes which observe that custom And my hope that the book will prove useful depends on the fact that it is for the most part merely Crooke s work re-arranged

There is however also a good deal of fresh material Most of this is derived from the various census reports of 1901 and 1911 which are subsequent to the date of publication of Mr Crooke s work (At the census of 1921 no ethnographical enquiries were made which explains why I have so seldom referred to that report) The rest of the new material is derived from information which has come into my possession since 1911 either in the course of my other duties or which I have specially collected for this book

The name of this book is The Caste System of Northern India with special reference to the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh The twin provinces form a tract which from the dawn of history has been the home of Hinduism the centre of Hindu civilization and culture at their best—in a word Hindustan the country of the Hindu And its Hindu social system is the Hindu social system of northern India if there are variations elsewhere they are not in essentials It is this fact which justifies the first part of this book s title But the second part is equally important for it defines the scope both of the book and of the author s personal knowledge And indeed some fifty millions of people form a sufficient basis for generalization

I first began this book when I was on leave in 1913 I completed it when I again went on leave in 1922 during the interval there was a war on and those of us who, like myself had to remain in India had no time to spare for any piece of work that could wait When I was a third time on leave in 1927 and at intervals during the next two years, I revised the book completely and re-wrote certain parts of it Finally in 1930 I added the chapter which is based on certain parts of the report of the

United Provinces Banking Enquiry Committee, of which I was Chairman I mention these facts merely to explain why a book which is based to such a large extent on the census report of 1911, has not appeared until twenty years later. I can only hope that now that it has appeared it will prove of some use to somebody.

In this book various primitive customs are described as prevalent in various castes, and it is possible that a reader unacquainted with India may thereby be misled into supposing that such customs are common That is not the case The castes which possess such customs are invariably low, and invariably small. Most of them possess only a few thousand members, some only a few hundred Such customs are survivals from the past, and can be found in every civilized country which has a past In the present or future they have no importance Their significance is not sociological, but purely ethnographical

I have to acknowledge gratefully the assistance which I have received in the preparation of this book I have to thank first His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey, G C I E, K C S I, Governor of the United Provinces, and his Government, for permitting me to include quotations from Crooke's *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh* (which was a Government publication), and also to use the material available in the Banking Enquiry Committee's Report already mentioned. My grateful thanks are also due to Rai Bahadur Pandit Suraj Din Bajpai and Khan Bahadur Saiyid Ain-ud-din, who between them examined the entire book in proof and made many useful suggestions for its improvement, to Miss Gray, who prepared for me the caste index and the glossary of vernacular terms, and to Miss Hills, who prepared the general index

E A H B

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF CASTE

1 The difficulty of defining caste

Everybody knows that 'caste' is the name given to groups of a certain kind into which Hindu society is divided, but it is not easy to define the term precisely Castes are not all built on the same model the system has grown up slowly and gradually, and castes which are of different origin are also of different nature They all have, as a common characteristic, a spirit of exclusiveness which has the effect of restricting the intercourse of their members both with each other and with members of other castes But that will not carry us very far For this spirit has manifested itself variously, and the restrictions which it causes are consequently various One caste forbids the remarriage of widows, another permits it, one permits its members to accept food from certain outsiders, another forbids such acceptance from anybody but a caste fellow In the United Provinces and northern India generally, certain castes are regarded as conveying pollution by touch in other parts of India, the same or similar castes are regarded as conveying pollution not only by touch but by mere proximity

2 The principal characteristics of the caste system

None the less it is possible to state certain characteristics which are common to all but exceptional castes These are three in number —

(1) Heredity A Hindu is born a member of the caste to which his parents belong and all his life[1] remains a member of it To change one's caste is impossible

[1] But not after death The Hindu who believes in transmigration, would see nothing strange in a good Chamar being reborn as a Chattri

(ii) Endogamy Every member of a caste must marry a member of the same caste and may not marry outside it

(iii) Restrictions on commensality Every caste lays down with precision rules regarding the acceptance of food and drink by its members from other people the kind of food that may be so accepted and also the kind of food that may be eaten at all

There are, so far as I know no castes whatever that have not some sort of commensal restrictions, though these vary in their stringency There are however certain castes which do not observe the birth and endogamous restrictions Such castes permit outsiders to be initiated into their fellowship and the initiates are then allowed to marry within the caste But these exceptions to the general rule are in one way or another abnormal [1]

There are two main varieties of caste and several minor varieties The main varieties are

3. The main varieties of caste

(i) The functional caste, which is composed of persons following the same occupation Instances are numerous by far the greater number of castes are functional The Barhai (carpenter) the Sonar (goldsmith) the Lohar (blacksmith) the Nai (barber) the Teli (oil presser) the Thathera (coppersmith) are a few examples

(ii) The tribal or racial caste, which is composed of persons who are or believe themselves to be united by blood or race Such castes are less common the Jat the Gujar the Bhar the Pasi the Dom are the best known

Of minor varieties may be mentioned

(iii) The sectarian caste which is composed of persons united by a common belief There are only four examples in the United Provinces—the Atith Goshain Bishnoi and Sadh

(iv) The hill castes, which are subject to restrictions much less severe than their neighbours in the plains

(v) The outlaw castes, which were originally h- -

[1] Such castes are the sectarian gipsy and outlaw castes.

rule, groups of broken men and outcastes who had banded together for purposes of self-defence or of crime, and subsequently became a caste. Instances are the Badhik, Barwar and Sanaurhiya

(vi) The Muhammadan castes

There are castes which it is difficult to classify The Ahir has a well defined occupation (cattle-owning) yet it appears to be a tribal caste in origin The Kurmi is certainly formed of different racial elements, but has no traditional occupation, unless agriculture can be regarded as such but there are many castes of cultivators, whilst there is only one caste of carpenters, blacksmiths, barbers, etc The Khattri caste, according to its own account, would be an offshoot of an old occupational caste—the Kshatriya—which had given up the Kshatriya's occupation The gipsy castes appear to be in origin tribal castes, whose blood has been much modified by free recruitment of outsiders

4 Functional castes

Functional castes have been described by Sir Edward Gait as 'aggregations of various tribes or pre-existing castes who have been drawn together by the bond of a common occupation' In other words, people who happened to follow the same occupation, trade or profession, were impelled to combine for the purpose of defending their common interests and regulating their common affairs, in spite of the fact that they were of different blood Constant intercourse in the course of business drew these divergent elements together, and also separated them from the communities of which they were formerly part, till at last a new caste, occupational in nature, was formed This process still goes on at the present day community of occupation still draws people of different castes together, so closely that at times it is not easy to decide whether a new functional caste has or has not yet been formed Examples are the Atashbaz (firework-maker), Bisati (peddler), Nanbai (baker), Qalaigar (tinsmith), Raj (mason), Rangsaz (painter), Rangrez (dyer), some of which are regarded as castes whilst others are not

In a functional caste there may of course, be other ties to reinforce the bond of common occupation—the same tutelary god or fetish, as in the case of the Bhangis, who generally worship Balmik or Lal Beg the same reputed origin as in the case of the Chamars, who claim descent according to different legends,* from a prince who buried an elephant whole, from a Brahman who removed a cow from the wayside or from the union of a Nishada husband and Chandala wife, the same social rank or the same ceremonies, social or religious. But in all cases the great bond of union is the common occupation

5 *The tribal caste*

The tribe in its original form is an aggregation of persons who have, or believe themselves to have a common origin it is this, together with common political interests and the need of mutual defence, that holds them together A tribe is not a close corporation like a caste It admits aliens who are willing to throw in their lot with it especially women obtained by purchase or capture It is not necessarily endogamous, though circumstances especially its own and its neighbours unwillingness to give their maidens to strangers, tend to make it so Tribal castes are sprung from those tribes which have come into close contact with Hinduism and its social ordinances, have gradually accepted them and been merged into the Hindu social system In such castes there are, of course, usually subsidiary bonds of union, in common deities, common worship hereditary priests, common observances, taboos, totems, and rites

6. *Endogamous subcastes*

Though every caste as a whole is endogamous, this does not always imply that any male member of the caste can marry any woman of the caste provided she is outside the prohibited degrees A caste is often indeed usually divided into sections which are themselves endogamous for instance, a Brahman of the Gaur subcaste can only marry a Gaur woman

The origin of these endogamous subcastes is a complicated subject which is fully dealt with in a later chapter But here we may notice the difference between functional

and tribal castes in the matter of these endogamous sub-castes Functional castes normally possess them it is indeed probable that such castes from the very first were made up of groups which either refused to intermarry, or were at all events predisposed to endogamy. Amid the goldsmiths, for instance, would be included the big jeweller of the city and the small goldsmith of the village: there would be the Kshatriya goldsmith and the Vaisya goldsmith and the Sudra goldsmith, of different blood and social rank Presuming that these groups of different origin were already subject to a class prejudice against intermarriage, they would be as unwilling to take wives from each other within the 'trade guild' as they were without it. Tribal castes have fewer endogamous subdivisions some, such as the Jat and Gujar, have none at all Where they exist, the subcastes may occasionally date back to the early tribal days. for instance, there may have been no right of intermarriage, from the very first, between members of the full blood and members of the half blood, the offspring of captured or other alien women But most subcastes of this kind have probably grown up since the tribe has adopted Hinduism and become a caste The formation of such groups is still constantly going on.

7. Definition of caste

We can now put together the various attributes which we have found to be common to all castes, and thus form a working definition, as follows · 'A caste is an endogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups, bearing a common name, membership of which is hereditary, arising from birth alone, imposing on its members certain restrictions in the matter of social intercourse, either

(i) following a common traditional occupation, or

(ii) claiming a common origin, or

(iii) both following such occupation and claiming such origin, and generally regarded as forming a single homogeneous community'[1]

[1] This definition is an expansion of Sir E Gait's in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*

Most of the items in the above definition are fully dealt with elsewhere but a few remarks may be made here in respect of two of them

(a) *Heredity of membership in relation to endogamy* If a group be endogamous, then provided that no legal or religious fictions of the nature of adoption or initiation are in customary use membership of it must necessarily be hereditary But membership of a group may be hereditary without that group being endogamous for a potter may marry a barber's daughter and his son still be a potter In the case of the functional groups it is probable that membership was hereditary before the groups became endogamous for function itself became hereditary at a very early date The tribal groups probably used legal fictions to recruit their numbers, adopting or initiating outsiders into their communities indeed some of them such as the gipsy castes, do so still It seems likely therefore that heredity of membership in their case was the result of endogamy and not antecedent to it

(b) *The homogeneity of caste* It is to be noted that the definition of caste does not assert that it is, but merely that it is generally regarded as, a single homogeneous community As a matter of fact many castes, sprung of heterogeneous elements are far from homogeneous The endogamous subcastes may be so but there are often considerable differences between the customs of one subcaste and those of another None the less the caste as a whole is regarded as a single entity

8 The relation between ast and endogamous subcast

And this fact is of importance in deciding what are castes and what are not It may be asked as M Senart[1] with the full weight of his authority asked Why not consider the endogamous subcaste as the caste? It is endogamous membership of it arises from birth it enforces social restrictions on its members, follows a common traditional occupation or claims a common origin It is a single homogeneous community in a more real sense than a caste

[1] *Les Castes dans l'Inde* (1896).

There are numerous objections The endogamy of a subcaste is not as rigid as that of a caste. A marriage between (say) a Brahman bridegroom and a Rajput bride is unthinkable, but intermarriages have occurred between subcastes of the same caste with no worse consequence than a purificatory sacrifice, and if circumstances make it desirable, such as a lack of women, subcaste endogamy is abandoned Even in the Brahman caste this has occurred Subcaste endogamy is mutable sometimes a subcaste which is endogamous in one place is not so in another A trifling quarrel will drive two groups that formerly intermarried to endogamy the removal of the cause of offence removes the restriction But the most potent of all objections is the fact that endogamous subcastes are not regarded by their own members or by the rest of Hindu society as castes To call such groups castes is to treat them as being what no Hindu would admit them to be An investigator is not at liberty to manipulate his material so as to make it fit his theories

9 *Other groups in the Hindu social system*

We have seen that Hindu society is divided into two kinds of group, the caste, and the endogamous subcaste, which is a section of the caste of a particular kind This, however, does not exhaust the segmentation of Hindu society There is, firstly, a division into groups which are larger than the caste, and, secondly, a division into groups which are smaller than the caste, or endogamous subcaste where it exists The second kind of group is the exogamous section, which is composed of persons who are, or believe themselves to be, so closely akin that marriage between them is impossible The nature and place of the exogamous section in the caste system will be fully discussed in a subsequent chapter The first kind of group is the social class Theoretically, there are four such classes—namely, the old *varnas*, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra, and for certain purposes these are still maintained But for most purposes vaguer classifications are adopted, which vary according to the object in view Sometimes the classifications will be into 'twice-born' and 'once

born the latter corresponds to the Sudra of the old dispensation the former to the other three *varnas* At other times it will be into the very vague touchable and untouchable But most frequently perhaps, the social class of any particular caste will be decided on the basis of the social intercourse which can legitimately be held with that caste in the matter of food and drink From this point of view there is nothing which can be called a classification at all every man decides each case for himself on its merits as it arises and acts accordingly there are as many classifications as there are men, or, at all events, as there are castes Yet vague as it is, the social class is a most important matter to any Hindu.[1] It represents, to use Sir Edward Gait s phrase, the external view of the social organization,[2] To the individual his caste may be of supreme importance but to anybody else it is a matter of comparative indifference The Brahman who is brought into contact with a man of lower caste will not care whether he is a Nai or a Teli The important question for him is the extent to which he can associate with him whether he can take water from his hands or not and that question is decided by his class

Here we may notice how complicated is the segmentation of Hindu society It is largely this fact which is responsible for the ignorance of the average Hindu about his caste system and the difficulty experienced at successive census enumerations, of obtaining a correct answer to the simple question What is your caste? One man will state his social class naming one of the ancient *varnas*—especially if the claim of his caste to belong to that *varna* is disputable and he thinks it desirable to assert it Another will give his endogamous subcaste—especially if it sounds better than his caste A third will give his exogamous section a fourth will mention some caste title The Hindu generally speaking is ignorant

[1] Sir R Burn (*Census Report U P.*, 1901) drew up a classification of this kind.

[2] *Census Report India* 1911 p. 366.

of all social distinctions which do not affect him personally, and very careless in his statement of those that do —a fact which makes the task of the enquirer into caste none the easier.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

Vernacular Terminology

The word caste translates two vernacular terms with different meanings The first is *zat* (breed) with *qaum* (tribe) as a synonym the second is *biradari* or *bhaiband* (brotherhood) The *zat* is the caste as a whole the *biradari* is the group of caste brethren who live in a particular neighbourhood and act together for caste purposes The *biradari* quantitatively considered is a mere fraction of the *zat* qualitatively considered it is the *zat* in action The use of the word caste in the two senses has caused some confusion When we speak of caste customs and caste offences the customs are those of the *zat* and the offences are against the whole *zat* but when we speak of caste assemblies, caste councils, and punishments inflicted by the caste the assemblies and councils are of the *biradari* and it is the *biradari* which inflicts the punishments One brotherhood will occasionally refuse to recognize a penalty inflicted by another a fact which shows their independence

The terminology of subdivisions of the caste is extremely vague In 1885 Sir Denzil Ibbetson Sir Herbert Risley and Mr Nesfield laid down certain English terms for use in ethnographical enquiries They divided castes into (i) castes, and (ii) tribes (which correspond respectively to what I have called functional and tribal castes) the smallest endogamous groups within a caste and tribe were called subcaste and subtribe respectively the largest exogamous groups were designated section and sept The attempt failed largely because there were no general vernacular terms to correspond *Nikas* (origin) *bans mul* (stock) *al kul* (family) *gotra* (group) of agnates —are the commonest terms but different castes use them in different senses, and many castes have terms of their own e.g *nukh* (Bhatia) *pal* (Jat) *pangat* (Bansphor) *bani* (Halwai) *thal* (Gangari Brahman) and *kuri* (Agaria)

CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF CASTE

1 Theories of the origin of caste

The origin of caste is a subject which has given rise to a great deal of speculation, some of it wild, some of it ingenious, and all of it inconclusive. Roughly, theorists can be divided into two schools. The older school[1] based its arguments on Brahmanical literature—the Vedas and its commentaries, the Puranas, the lawbooks, the epics. Its writers differ in many respects, but they have two points in common. Firstly, all agree in referring caste to extreme antiquity, and secondly, they regard the system as the artificial product of the Brahmanical priestly order. These deductions follow naturally enough from their authorities—'a literature which was all the work of Brahmans deeply interested in asserting the divine origin of an institution in which they are the leading members'.[2] But in recent years fresh evidence has become available; there has been much scientific study of inscriptions and coins, and patient investigation of the Buddhist and Jain sacred works. These works are of authors who were in definite opposition to the Brahmans, and present a different picture of early society. A new school of theorists[3] has now arisen, which also has two leading tendencies—

[1] Its leading exponents are Max Müller (*Chips from a German Workshop*), Sir D. Ibbetson (*Census Report, Punjab*, 1881), Sir J. B. Fuller (*Empire of India*), and Mr Crooke in his earlier works. Mr Nesfield held a position peculiarly his own (*Brief View of the Caste System of the N.-W. P. and Oudh*, 1886).

[2] Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, p. 86.

[3] Sir H. Risley (*The People of India*, 1915 edition) holds a position midway between the two schools. Exponents of the new theory are Bouglé (*Essais sur le régime des castes*), Dahlmann (*Das Altindische Volkstum*), Oldenberg (*Geschichte des Indischen Kastenwesens*), Gait (*Census Report, India*, 1911, and elsewhere), and many others. Senart's position is to some extent *sui generis*. Crooke in his *Natives of Northern India* adopts the views of this school of writers to some extent.

firstly to post-date the origin of caste to comparativel modern times and secondly to look for its origin in th nature of the elements composing early Indian society and for its development in the working of social force on those elements

No theory so far propounded has commanded univei sal assent Of the best the most that can be said i that it seems tenable—so far for information abou early Indian society is even still meagre and the di covery of a new fact may upset the best of theories Th majority are infected with the disease common to s many theories—the lack of a sense of proportion in tha far too much importance is attached to some one point which is certainly cardinal to the particular theory bu is also regarded as the cardinal point in the whole en quiry I propose to indulge in no theory-making bu merely to epitomize what information we possess o Hindu society as it was at different periods and conside what light is thrown on the growth of the caste systen by such information

2 Society in the Vedic period

In the Vedic hymns occurs the well known vers When they divided man how man did they make him? What was hi mouth? What his arms? What ar called his thighs and his feet? The Brahmana was his mouth the Rajanya was made his arms the Vaisya became his thighs the Sudra was born fron his feet [1] This verse is an interpolation though a ver old one Such as it is, it is the sole Vedic reference to anything that can be connected with caste and the connexion is one of names alone The Brahmana, Rajanya Vaisya, Sudra described in this verse are clearly not castes they are merely kinds, or types, of men Throughout the Vedas there is not a single reference to connubial or commensal restrictions, to any of the characteristics of the modern Hindu social system A few occupations are differentiated—the leech the smith the artizan but there is no hint of the existence of func-

[1] *Rig Veda* x. 90, 11 12. Elsewhere a fifth class, the Nishada or barbarian, is mentioned.

tional groups or hereditary crafts But a very marked differentiation is drawn in the Vedas between two races, living side by side in India, namely the Arya and the Dasyu The Aryas are a fair-skinned race that have already attained a high pitch of civilization, tillers of the soil, founders of villages and towns, possessing a certain knowledge of the higher handicrafts The Dasyus are a dark-skinned race of semi-savage jungle dwellers, who are (rightly or wrongly) represented as autochthonous The Vedas, and following them, modern popular belief, represent the Dasyus as forcibly conquered and enslaved by the Aryas More probably, however, this 'conquest' was a peaceful one—'more moral and intellectual, more a blending of the newcomer with the native, than a substitution of the white man for the dark-skinned race The Arya became absorbed in the Dasyu, as the Lombard in the Italian, the Frank in the Gaul, the Norman in the Frenchman, the Moor in the Spaniard '[1] There were other invasions at a later date, which also led to blending of newcomer and native The Hindu race in northern India, therefore, is the result of a combination of several strains of blood

3 The beginnings of endogamy

This combination, inevitably, took place by intermarriage Experience has shown that when two races are compelled to intermarry, which are widely different in civilization and in their intellectual and physical attributes, the process is begun with reluctance and ended at the earliest possible moment The result is mutual contempt all round, the half-breed is despised by the man of pure blood, whether high or low, the man of the lower blood is despised by the half-breed Intermarriage ceases as soon as possible —that is to say, as soon as the higher race has bred enough women for its own wants And, as a result, all the various groups of different degrees of mixed blood tend to become exclusive, to close their ranks to those of lower degree than themselves—in short, tend to become

[1] Crooke, *N-W Provinces of India*, p 60

endogamous. And where a colour question arises, that tendency becomes all the more marked as has been observed for instance among the mulattos, quadroons, and other groups of the mixed white and negro races and as is still to be observed to a certain extent in India to-day [1] All these circumstances were present in the Vedic age The Arya was a high race the Dasyu a low The Arya despised and hated perhaps also feared the Dasyu he looked on him as foul-mannered as an eater of raw and even human flesh and he felt a strong repugnance to his physical peculiarities—a low stature, a dark skin a flat nose The colour question was very prominent and impressed itself deeply on the Arya s imagination [2] in deed the usual word for a social class was *varna* which means colour Intermarriage in such circumstances cannot have been free and unrestrained It began it ceased as soon as possible As cadets both of the full and half blood pushed further afield it began again and again ceased The result would be the formation of groups of all shades of colour all degrees of mixed blood —all with a strong tendency to endogamy

4 Society in the Buddhist period

In the Jatakas [4] a collection of folk tales used by pious compilers as a medium of moral instruction there is an account of society as it existed in early Buddhist times The colour distinction so prominent in the Vedas, has faded into the background though its memory survives in the word *varna* used for the four social classes—Kshatriya Brahman Vaisya and Sudra It will be noticed that the Kshatriya heads the list the Lords spiritual have not yet taken pride of

For other examples, see Risley *Census Report India*, 1901, p. 555 Risley account is here closely followed.

The distinction between fair and dark is still real to the people, as is shown by their proverbs and in other ways. It is a commonplace that a *fair bride* finds husband more easily than a dark bride.

Anthropometry has proved that the Hindu race is of mixed origin if it has proved nothing else. For discussion of the elements in that race see Risley *Th People of India*.

The Jatakas are of various dates, but probably all anterior to the 4th century B.C. See V A. Smith, *Early History f India*, 4th edition, 1924, pp. 11 and 65, note

place from the Lords temporal, and indeed the Brahman is held to be *hina-jacco,* lowborn, in comparison with the Kshatriya nobility But these *varnas* are not yet castes The birth qualification has not yet developed to make them close corporations Vaisyas and Sudras rise to the rank of Kshatriyas, anybody can become a Brahman by becoming a priest, a fact corroborated by such legends as that of Visvamitra, a Kshatriya who became an ascetic[1] There is no endogamous restriction, a Brahman marries a Kshatriya's widow, and according to one Jataka, Buddha himself, a Kshatriya of the Sakya clan, married a poor cultivator's daughter Marriage within the class was no doubt regarded as preferable to marriage without it, but only personal prejudice and social convention stood in the way of the latter

Below the *varnas* were the *hina-sippani*—low trades such as the barber, potter, or weaver and the *hina-jātiyo*[2]—low tribes, possibly the remnants of the Dasyu tribes on the outskirts of civilization Lowest of all, there were the Chandala and other outcaste tribes[3] We know nothing of their marriage rules, or of the relations between them and the *varnas* But in such a society of classes as this, we may suppose that marriages between the higher *varnas* and these low tribes seldom, if ever, occurred Now and then a King Cophetua may have married a beggar-maid, but the occurrence was rare enough to be made the occasion of a ballad A Kshatriya would no more have married the daughter of a barber, than a noble lord of the present day would marry a milkmaid At the same time there was neither more nor less to prevent such a marriage

We also hear much of occupational guilds, which seem to have been a cross division of the
5 *The guilds* *varnas* based on occupation These trade guilds, similar in their general attributes

[1] For Visvamitra's story, see appendix to this chapter

[2] Some of these followed hereditary occupations of a primitive nature, such as basket-making, the collection of jungle produce, fowling

[3] *The Toy Cart* (see below) contains amongst its characters two Chandala executioners Another such outcaste tribe would be the 'dog-eaters' of the Visvamitra story (see appendix)

to the merchant guilds of mediaeval Europe were influential corporations even in Buddhist times and later as references in Manu, Yajnavalkya, Narada, and other lawgivers prove, became dangerously powerful Their power was based on their wealth they were the financiers of the age, kings were their debtors, and the many privileges which they enjoyed were doubtless conferred on them in return for assistance in money They had their own family inheritance and apprentice laws with which the king could not interfere they tried their own law suits and could only be taxed with their own approval it is even laid down that the king must approve whatever the guilds do to other people, whether it be cruel or kind Each guild was ruled by a president (*sreshthi*)[1] and council of four who decided both domestic and business disputes There was also a chief merchant who apparently ruled all the guilds in a particular city or neighbourhood he also was known as *sreshthi* or *mahasreshthi* This chief merchant is referred to in two old dramas In *The Toy Cart* (which belongs probably to the 5th century A D) he sits as a sort of assessor to the judge in a case where the accused is a merchant in *The Seal of Rakshasa*[2] which, though written apparently in the 11th century A D deals with events of about 300 B C one Chandana Das *sreshthi* of the jewellers guild is subsequently made chief merchant These guilds were purely occupational bodies persons following a particular profession of whatever social class (*varna*) they might be belonged to them There is abundant evidence of this The Jatakas show us nobles and kings sons, who were Kshatriyas, and Brahman priests, taking to all sorts of occupations, one noble for instance in pursuit of a love affair becomes successively a potter a garland-maker and a

[1] *Seth* title used by merchants, is its modern equivalent.
Mrichchakati, a Sanskrit play: translated in Wilson, *Hindu Theatre* Vol. I
[2] *Mudra Rakshas* a Sanskrit play: translated in Wilson, op. cit., Vol. II.

confectioner.[1] In *The Toy Cart* the hero, a merchant and grandson of a *sreshthi*, is a Brahman by *varna*. In *The Seal of Rakshasa*, Chandana Das appears to be a Vaisya.[2] That guilds recruited chiefly from the *varnas* is not surprising; they would not recruit from the *hina-jatiyo* and the outcastes, for they were the aristocracy of wealth, and these with the *varnas* made up the entire population. Function in the guilds was, or before very long became, hereditary, for Megasthenes, who wrote at a period not far removed from that which we are now considering, mentions the fact.

It is in these guilds that Dahlmann and other modern writers see the source from which modern functional castes are derived, and certainly there are striking points of similarity. Without committing ourselves to any particular theory, we can safely assert that corporations as powerful and well organized as these must have exercised a considerable influence on the development of the social system.

6. Caste in the Maurya period.

Megasthenes, ambassador from Seleukus Nikator to Chandragupta Maurya (the Sandrokottos of the Greeks), in 303 B.C. wrote a work on India which exists only in fragments. It contains, however, a famous account of the social system of his day, which has fortunately been preserved by Strabo, Arrian and other writers. It must be admitted that his attempt to classify the social groups is confused. He divides the people into seven parts:—

(i) The philosophers, who are described as priests and advisers of the king;

(ii) the husbandmen, who form the bulk of the population and are exempt from military service;

(iii) the herdsmen and hunters;

(iv) those who work at trades or vend wares, and labourers;

(v) the fighting men, whose only duty is to fight;

[1] The potter is a *hina-sippani*; the other two were guilds. No doubt the 'low trades' imitated their betters in the matter of organization.

[2] The possibility of his execution is mentioned, a fate from which Brahmans were, or at all events are represented as being, exempt.

2

(vi) the overseers (*episkopoi*)—whoever they may be and

(vii) the councillors, judges and administrators in the king s service

We can no doubt identify the philosophers and fighting men with the Brahmans and Kshatriyas but the second third and fourth groups would include both Vaisyas and Sudras, and the third and fourth also some *hina jatiyo* and *hina sippani* The fourth would include also all the guilds, of which Megasthenes mentions two the armourers and shipbuilders, as possessing special privileges The sixth and seventh of Megasthenes classes are mere professional groups councillors and judges were usually Brahmans,[2] whilst if the *episkopoi* represent the spies of the time they were probably of all classes Little can be made of this part of the account but there are in addition some interesting general statements According to Strabo s version we read as follows

No one is allowed to marry out of his own caste or to exchange one profession or trade for another or to follow more than one business An exception is made in favour of the philosopher who for his virtue is allowed this privilege Arrian says much the same, save in the last sentence, which in his version runs It is permitted that a sophist only may be of any caste for the sophist s life is not an easy one but the hardest of all [4]

There are here three definite and important assertions

(i) that intermarriage between castes was forbidden

(ii) that function was hereditary

(iii) that the philosopher was exempt from one or both of these rules

It is difficult to accept the first statement literally

They have been identified (1) with spies generally; ( ) with certain inspectors of morals of Buddhist invention (3) with news-reporters in the provinces.

e g. Chanakya and Rakshasa in the *Mudra Rakshasa*.

The *Mudra Rakshasa* has two spies amongst its characters; one i a Brahman, the other a Vaisya.

The word caste in this translation is used in a somewhat question-begging way—a vaguer word would have been more appropriate.

for facts are against it Chandragupta, the very king to whom Megasthenes was accredited, was notoriously of mixed descent, and so were some of his predecessors, whilst there is abundant evidence of the occurrence of mixed marriages at a much later date But it is perhaps legitimate to conclude that such marriages were exceptional as early as the 4th century B C

The second assertion is important, for it is the first definite record of the hereditary nature of function and caste membership [1]

The third assertion is couched in vague terms by Strabo It is not clear what exactly *is* the philosopher's privilege, but probably we are meant to understand that he could marry whom he pleased and follow what occupation he liked , Arrian's account only puts this in another way for if a man of another than the Brahman caste were to become a philosopher, he might very well marry in his original caste and preserve his original occupation If by 'philosopher' is meant 'Brahman', the Greek author's account fits the known facts well enough In *The Toy Cart* the Brahman hero, Charudatta, who is a merchant as his ancestors were before him, marries a courtesan, who was certainly not a Brahman, whatever she was And we know already that many members of other castes became Brahmans

In Megasthenes' account, therefore, we can trace a distinct advance towards the modern caste system Endogamy has become customary, and in India what has become customary is well on the way to becoming law Caste membership and occupation have become hereditary The Brahman is a sole exception—'for his virtue', he is still allowed to marry whom he pleases and follow what occupation he likes It must be admitted, however, that Megasthenes' authority is to be followed with considerable caution The worthy Greek, if he is rightly quoted by Strabo and others, probably had his fair share of credulity—or imagination,[2] that he was

[1] According to the *Mudra Rakshasa* even the post of king's minister was hereditary

[2] Megasthenes, like Othello, revels in 'Anthropophagi, and men whose heads Do grow beneath their shoulders'

not an accurate observer, his very account of the castes is sufficient to show

7 The period 300 B.C. to 300 A.D.

For the next six centuries we hear little about caste The history of this period is collated from inscriptions, coins Puranic lists of dynasties, and scattered statements in literature it is not from such sources as these that much information about the development of society is to be gathered, and what little there is is more interesting than important From the introduction to the play *Malavikagnimitra* for instance, we learn that Agnimitra, a king of the Sunga dynasty (*circa* 150 B C) married a wife of inferior caste An inscription records how an Andhra king, Vilivayakura II about 126 A D destroyed a Saka chief and prevented the mixing of the four castes—what ever may be the precise meaning of that phrase Fa Hien the Chinese pilgrim (405-411 A D) describes how Chandalas had to live apart, and give notice of their approach on entering a town by striking a piece of wood—treatment similar to that of lepers in the middle age And so on chance references to isolated facts are all that we possess Yet the period from the point of view of social development, must have been one of considerable importance For it was the period during which several great invasions of India occurred—of the Sakas, the Yavanas, the Pahlavas and the Kushans These must have left their mark on society luckily though we know little or nothing of the effect that they produced we do know something of the results of a later invasion that of the Huns, and can at all events argue from that analogy

8 The account of Manu

But before we try to analyse the results, of the Hunnish invasion in particular and of other invasions in general, on the development of the Hindu social system we must first consider the most famous of all the accounts of caste which we possess—that contained in the *Institutes* of Manu Both this work and the principal Puranas, in their present form, are now usually

assigned to the golden age of Sanskrit literature under the early Gupta kings (330-450 A D) A brief résumé of Manu's account will suffice, for its leading features are well known There are three kinds of social groups, all connected —

(i) The *varnas*, with which we are already acquainted The Brahman and Kshatriya are now represented, practically, as occupational castes, the 'sacerdotal' and 'ruling and military' castes respectively The Vaisya and Sudra groups are less clearly defined, they are, however, described in terms which enable us to identify them respectively as a trading and industrial, and a menial class

(ii) The *vratya* and *vrisala* castes, who are described as descendants of the three principal or 'twice born' *varnas*, who have omitted to perform the prescribed rites, and failed to reverence Brahmans, the *vrisala* are distinguished from the *vratya* as being ex-Kshatriyas Amongst them are found groups called Khasa, Dravira, Saka, Yavana, Pahlava, and China, and these names show clearly enough what Manu's *vratyas* and *vrisalas* really were These are all the names of aboriginal or invading tribes and races,[1] as 'castes', they are doubtless such sections of those tribes and races as had become partially or wholly Hinduized They will be referred to again in a subsequent paragraph

(iii) The *varnasankaras* or mixed castes These are represented by Manu as descended from mixed unions between some pair belonging to different *varnas*, or respectively one to a *varna* and one to a *varnasankara*, or to different *varnasankaras* Nearly all of them, it should be noticed, are occupational castes

The great critic Max Muller long ago laboured to demonstrate the absurdity of Manu's account of the origin of the various groups in the Hindu social system and ever since it has been the fashion to push Manu aside, as an authority of no importance There can be

[1] For Khasa, see Chapter VIII (hill castes) Dravira = Dravidian, Saka = Scythian, Yavana = Greek (Ionian), Pahlava = Persian (or rather Parthian) These are the usual identifications

no doubt that when Manu described the *vratya* and *vrisala* castes as descendants of the twice born *varnas* who had omitted to perform the prescribed rites, he was wrong As has been suggested above and as will be shown more clearly below these castes represent foreign groups who claimed the status of the twice born *varnas* but as foreigners, doubtless, did neglect to 'perform the prescribed rites Similarly the occupational *varna sankaras* were not descended from mixed unions, but they were as we have seen made up of groups of different parentage and consequently were of mixed descent In short Manu s etiology may be grotesque if taken literally but it is not at all grotesque if taken allegorically In any case so much can safely be said —that the account in Manu s *Institutes* is in essentials an accurate account of the social system as it was at the time We find side by side *varnas* or classes, tribal castes and occupational castes That is precisely the state of affairs as it exists at the present day Moreover if we allow for an increase in the number of tribal castes sprung of the various invaders of India during the intervening period it is also the state of affairs which existed in the early Buddhist era, so that continuity between the earliest and latest times is established In the matter of marriage mixed unions still occur and Manu gives many regulations on the subject Here again there is continuity The endogamous custom which was regarded as preferable in the Buddhist period has become usual by the time of Megasthenes and by Manu s a rule the exceptions to which are carefully regulated

9. The Hunnish invasion

In 465 A D there occurred an inroad of white Huns These were savages from the Central Asian steppes and closely akin to the Huns who invaded Europe under Attila and twelve years before this date had been crushed at Châlons By 500 A.D the hordes of these white Huns had overrun northern India and a Hun kingdom had been set up with its capital at the modern Sialkot Mihiragula their last king and a

bloodthirsty tyrant, was defeated and slain about 528 A.D. by a coalition of Indian princes, and with his death the power of the Huns came to an end. Indian writers are as silent about Mihiragula as they are about Alexander, or Mahmud of Ghazni, or any other of their conquerors. But Hiuen-Tsiang's account of the portents which were supposed to have accompanied the death of the Hunnish tyrant shows how deep was the impression which his barbarity made on the Hindu imagination, and if we remember the sufferings inflicted on Europe by Attila, we shall have no difficulty in believing that the Hunnish invasion shook Indian society to its foundations.

Of late, evidence[1] has been discovered which connects some of our modern castes directly with these Huns. The Gujar caste takes its name from Gujara, a tribe which is frequently found coupled in inscriptions with the Huns, and was obviously related to them. Hun is still the name of a Gujar sect or subcaste, which makes the connexion but the clearer. The Gujara carved out a couple of kingdoms in Rajputana, the capital of one of these was at Bhinmal or Bhilmal. In 810 A.D. a king of Bhinmal, of the Pratihara dynasty, conquered Kanauj and founded the Parihar dynasty which ruled there till 1018 A.D. It seems, therefore, a legitimate presumption that the present Parihar clan of Rajputs is of Gujara descent. And Crooke's pages are full of evidence suggesting that similar affinities exist between other Rajput clans and other foreign or aboriginal races.

10. Results of the Hunnish and other Invasions on the caste system

This evidence from several points of view, has an importance which can scarcely be overestimated. Firstly, it shows conclusively the way in which the Hunnish and probably all other invasions, affected the development of the caste system. Neither the aboriginal tribes of India—Dravidian or Dasyu, or whatever they may be called—nor the foreign invaders were ever entirely extirpated. They

[1] Which we owe largely to the researches of the late Mr A. M. T. Jackson, C.S.

yielded to the assimilative powers of Hinduism they accepted, no doubt with reservations and lapses into barbarism the customs of the higher civilization, and in the end came to be considered, and to consider themselves, members of Hindu society Clans that won chieftainships usurped the social rank and the title of Kshatriya or Rajput the rank and file became tribal castes, Gujars and others And if this happened in the case of the Huns who were barbarous savages, and of the Gonds and Bhars who were aboriginals, it is all the more likely that it happened in the case of the Sakas the Pahlavas, the Kushans, and other invaders who were far more civilized than they It is improbable that any Rajput clan of the present day or any tribal caste can trace its genuine genealogy so far back as the Saka or Kushan invaders but when Tod professes to find Scythian blood in Rajputana and other authorities derive the Jats from the Yueh-tschi (Kushans) or the Ahirs from the Abhiras, a tribe which maintained its independence into the Gupta period it has to be admitted that there is at all events no intrinsic improbability in such assertions

Secondly it enables us to understand what Manu's *vrisala* and *vratya* castes really were They were tribal castes sprung from these foreign invaders, who had adopted Hinduism just as the Gujara did at a later date It is a point on which *The Seal of Rakshasa* sheds some interesting light In that drama a force is described as arrayed against Chandragupta under the command of the great monarch of the Mlechcha tribes [1] Amongst his troops are mentioned the Khasas, Yavanas Sakas, Bahlikas, Parasikas, Hunas, and the bands of Chedi All of these tribes are historical The Sakas, Yavanas and Hunas were invaders of India. The Bahlikas were a tribe that occupied part of the Punjab in the 4th century A.D The Parasikas are the Persians or Parthians usually called Pahlavas Chedi was the capital of a central India kingdom ruled by Haihaya

[1] *Mlechcha* = foreign, outcaste *Mahata mlechcharajena* is the Sanskrit word.

Kshatriya One Purana states that from Chandragupta onwards, most kings were Sudras To turn from history to fiction *The Toy Cart* tells us how an Ahir cowherd became King of Ujjain It seems therefore that the ancient Kshatriya like the more modern Rajput was a social class to which all rulers in virtue of their sovereignty were recognized as belonging and both Kshatriya and Rajput groups can therefore be described as essentially an occupational caste, composed of all clans following the Hindu ritual who actually undertook the work of government [1]

II The decay of the Kshatriya

In the earlier Buddhist period the Kshatriya was socially supreme In Manu s picture of society that supremacy has passed to the Brahman and he enjoys it still Manu a Brahman himself may have exaggerated the importance of his own order yet the main fact, that the Kshatriya s power decayed and was replaced by a sacerdotal hegemony cannot be doubted The causes are to be found in the history of the time From 200 B C to 500 A D India was subjected to a series of invasions by powerful and occasionally savage enemies The Kshatriya ruling and military class must have suffered severely in consequence It was their rulers whose kingdoms were overturned their soldiery on whom the brunt of the fighting fell The ancient Kshatriyas were exposed to a constant process of attrition which must have gone close to destroying them altogether But they were exposed to attack from within as well as from without Buddhism was essentially a Kshatriya religion founded

[1] Manu says that men become Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, if their actions are those of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, or Vaisyas. This is usually regarded as a sort of moral precept men are esteemed according to their conduct. If it is, it is a singularly inefficient explanation of the origin of caste, which is what Manu meant it to be. The facts related seem to suggest that the words are to be literally interpreted that a man becomes a Brahman if he is a priest and, therefore acts as a Brahman; that he becomes a Kshatriya if he actually rules; and so on. Certainly facts are in favour of this interpretation. We have here cases of non-Kshatriyas becoming Kshatriyas because they ruled, and we have already found instances where non-Brahmans became Brahmans because they were priests or ascetics.

by a Kshatriya prince,[1] it was in definite opposition to Brahmanism, though it never succeeded in completely ousting it For some ten centuries the struggle between the two creeds went on, till Brahmanism ultimately conquered its rival after the death of Harsha of Thanesar in the middle of the seventh century A D There is no evidence that the struggle ever culminated in persecution or bloodshed, though the Brahmanical legend, according to which the Kshatriyas were wiped out of existence by the Brahman hero, Parasu Rama, or 'Rama with the axe', may conceal some unknown historical event[2] But so much seems certain, that the process of attrition to which the Kshatriyas succumbed was internal as well as external The Kshatriya, therefore, decayed His power as ruler passed by right of sword to foreigners—Sakas, Pahlavas, Kushans, Huns, each in their turn, who usurped the title of Kshatriya with their thrones The new kings and kinglets of India were often Hinduized outsiders

12 The rise of the Brahman

This was the Brahman's opportunity These pseudo-Kshatriyas, or Rajputs, may have usurped the powers and privileges of their predecessors, but they never attained to their social pre-eminence They might call themselves Kshatriya, but everybody else called them *vrisala* Meantime, the Brahman had increased his authority and consolidated his position He had long emerged from the stage when, in Vedic times, he was a humble acolyte at sacrifices, an assistant to the head of the family who officiated as the priest During the period which ended with the advent of Buddha, amidst a people that was intensely religious and still more intensely ritualist, he had become the hereditary priest, the sole master of religious ceremonial, the theologian, and as such had won for himself an almost unassailable spiritual supre-

[1] Gautama Buddha was a Kshatriya of the Sakya clan

[2] Parasu Rama may represent some successful tyrant A legend-monger would not hesitate to turn even the Hun Mihiragula into a Brahman hero

macy Further as philosopher and statesman by sheer force of learning he had acquired considerable temporal power The king s minister was usually a Brahman—and no mere figure head Vasishta the family priest of Trayyaruna King of Kosala, acted as his regent in his absence and set up a Brahman theocracy Chanakya overthrew the Nanda kings put Chandragupta Maurya on the throne and as his minister stood to his royal master in much the same relation as the Peshwas stood to the Maratha rajas, All the later Sunga kings were the merest puppets of their Brahman advisers the last of them was put to death by his minister Vasudeva who succeeded him as founder of the Kanva dynasty But apparently it was unusual for Brahmans to usurp the royal dignity doubtless preferring the substance which was theirs to the shadow which was the king s Hiuen-Tsiang refers to certain Brahman kings, but appears to mean no more by the term than Brahmanical Hindu and the first Brahman dynasty after the Kanvas is the Shahiya dynasty of Ohind in the 10th century Be that as it may it is not strange that Megasthenes, a worldly Greek in writing of the Brahman priest and adviser of the king chose the word philosopher' by which to describe him It was an unconscious tribute to the learning which had raised the former attendant at sacrifices to high estate

During the Buddhist era the Brahman s power suffered eclipse Buddhism a Kshatriya religion was a definite revolt both against Brahmanical ritual and against Brahmanical metaphysics But Brahmanism as has already been stated was never entirely destroyed Under the Gupta dynasty when Brahmanical learning became widely diffused the Brahman s ascendency both spiritual and temporal revived, and it increased during the troubled period which came with the destruction of the old Arya nobility Once the Kshatriyas had been ousted by Hinduized foreigners, the Brahmans the chief remaining link with the past obtained the social hegemony which had formerly belonged to the Kshatriyas never again to lose it

13 The final stage in the evolution of caste

Manu's account may be regarded as a true picture of the social system as it was about the end of the 4th century A D But though it resembles in all its principal features the system of the present day, yet there are certain important differences The endogamous restrictions, though generally observed, are not yet rigid and unavoidable, there is not yet any trace of such important elements in the present system as subcaste endogamy or commensal restrictions The Hun invasion, which occurred some sixty years after the date of Manu's account, no doubt had some effect, but the Hun empire only lasted some sixty years, and that effect must not be over-estimated It is necessary to look further afield for an explanation of the later development of the caste system Unfortunately, little is known of the period between the death of King Harsha of Thanesar in 650 A D and the commencement of the Muhammadan era, and though our historical knowledge then improves, yet it relates to the doings of kings and governors, of courts and armies, not to the condition of the people or to the social system It is, however, possible to fix a limit date for this final stage of evolution, and in a somewhat curious fashion For there is current in the great caste of Kayasthas, a circumstantial legend,[1] which exemplifies, firstly, the existence of subcastes, as we now know them, secondly, the formation of endogamous groups under the influence of forces that can still be observed in operation, and, thirdly, the present commensal restrictions in full force This tale, which seems undoubtedly historical, can be dated between the years 1202 A D, when Bakhtiyar Khilji became governor of Bengal, and 1266 A D, when Nasir-ud-din, one of the 'Slave' dynasty, died, for both play a part in the events related The last stage in the evolution of the caste system can therefore be dated between the second half of the seventh, and the end of the twelfth century A D.

[1] The tale is mentioned in Chapter III, par 27, and given in full as an appendix to Chapter III

4. The conditions of the age

After the death of Harsha, the country was parcelled out into a number of small Rajput kingdoms and they again in accordance with the Rajput feudal system, into baronies whose owners held them on condition of rendering military service to the king These petty kings and pettier barons were constantly fighting either with each other or with the remnants of aboriginal and foreign tribes, and the country side must have been strewn with the wreckage of war—companies of soldiery in pursuit of an enemy gangs of robbers, bands of broken men who had been driven from their homes Travel always difficult by reason of the great distances of India and the badness of mediaeval communications was positively dangerous save for the Brahman protected by his sanctity and the pilgrim protected by the nature of his errand In such conditions, each different state had its own social and functional groups and since a man dare not wander far afield in search either of clients or a bride, these local groups perforce became endogamous and so were produced those local endogamous sub-castes that are so common in most widespread castes And yet despite the multiplicity of political divisions Hindu society always remained one and undivided One cause of this was the custom of pilgrimage (*tirath jatra*) the sacred places were centres where members of the same caste from all over the country could meet to discuss and decide matters of common interest Another cause was the unity of Brahmanism transcending all political boundaries, which secured the unity of the society in which the Brahman was supreme But possibly the most important cause was the utter indifference of the people to political matters Subjects were not concerned with the quarrels of their rulers kings and their armies, barons and their followings might go to war but the peoples whom they ruled remained at peace A political boundary meant no more to them than a district boundary means to their descendants

The importance of pilgrimages in preserving the unity of caste was suggested to me by a Brahman friend.

at the present day. It merely determined the direction in which they must go to pay their taxes, and a change of rulers was merely a change of tax-gatherers. And so the local groups never ceased to regard themselves, or to be generally regarded, as mere sections of a single widespread caste.

The advent of Muhammadan rule did not alter the situation just described. There was, no doubt, a central government, under Sultan or Badshah at Delhi. But the empire was divided into provinces ruled by Muhammadan governors and tributary states ruled by Hindu princes, and when the central government was weak, governor and prince became semi-independent, and made war as they pleased. To the existing dangers of the country-side were added others—the Moghul raider, the Turk or Afghan mercenary in search of service, the Rajput clan moving in search of a new home under Muhammadan pressure. The people were perhaps less indifferent than of old to political matters, but that was principally because the Muhammadan sultans were apt to visit the sins of rebellious rulers on their innocent subjects.

15. Summary.

We have now examined the Hindu social system at various stages of its history, and we may pause here to summarize the results of that examination. At all times Hindu society has been divided into classes of differing rank, with a substratum of tribes too alien and too humbly placed to be within the social pale, and a cross-division of functional groups. This system, which existed in embryo during the Vedic period, has developed through the ages under the influences of circumstances which combined to make the groups endogamous, until it became the caste system as we know it. We can gauge the effect of some of these circumstances with a certain accuracy, the effect of others is still no more than conjectural. Amongst these circumstances were

(i) the juxtaposition, at several periods, of races different in blood, civilization, and especially colour;

(ii) the composition and system of the powerful trade guilds;

(iii) the influence of Hinduism which attracted and assimilated the most diverse elements

(iv) the huge distances of India its political and other divisions, which prevented the growth of national feeling and drove men to unite into smaller groups

(v) the influence of a sacerdotal order, able and willing to consolidate and regulate these multifarious groups and lastly

(vi) the psychological attributes of the Indian amenable to control and discipline fearful of offending against custom ready to submit to the coercion of guild council or Brahman lawgiver to welcome the development of custom into law

In short the caste system did not spring fully developed into existence like Athene from the head of Zeus It was not the artificial product of a man or body of men working consciously to that end It was a natural growth the result of a process of evolution

16. Conti uan e f the process of evolution

Nor has that process stopped Under the influence of its environment it has continued unceasingly up to the present day This assertion the following chapters are designed incidentally to prove

Principal authorities.—Rhys-Davids, *B ddhist India* (903).
V A. Smith, *E rly History f Indi* (1924)
Crooke, *Tribes and Castes f the N.-W.P and Oudh* (1896).

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II

The Story of Visvamitra and Vasistha

The story of the two famous *rishis*, Visvamitra and Vasistha, sheds much light on the early history of the caste system. The story is related, in various forms, both in a number of the Puranas, and also in the two great epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, and Mr. F. E. Pargiter has collated and compared these various traditions in an article, which he published in the R. A. Society's journal for October 1913. We need not follow the arguments by which he shows how a plain straightforward account of what may well have been fact was overlaid by a mass of what is certainly fable. But it is necessary to state his conclusions.

The Puranic accounts are based on a common original. This original Mr. Pargiter holds to be a Kshatriya ballad, first handed down orally from one court bard to another, and put in writing some six or seven centuries before Christ. This ballad exhibited the famous Brahman *rishi*, Vasistha, in a most unfavourable light, and consequently the Brahman writers, who compiled the Puranas, took care to manipulate the story so as to extenuate the *rishi's* conduct, whilst in the epics it becomes a monstrous fable.

The original story ran thus. Trayyaruna, the Kshatriya king of Kosala, whose capital was at Ayodhya, had a son, whose name was Satyavrata. This prince, 'in an outburst of youthful wantonness', interrupted a wedding ceremony and carried off the bride. She had not yet taken the seven steps which complete the wedding *mantras*, and so was not yet a wedded wife, and consequently his deed amounted only to the abduction of a betrothed maiden, which, though a serious offence, was much less serious than the rape of a wife would have been. Vasistha, who was the king's priest, was well aware of these

facts but he concealed them from his master who under the impression that his son was guilty of the major crime sentenced him to the degradation of herding with out caste dog-eaters in whose hamlet he was compelled to live The king overwhelmed by the disgrace, went into exile and Vasistha took charge of his kingdom—ruling as is pointedly stated with the help of the priests and religious teachers In other words, Vasistha schemed successfully to usurp the throne and to replace the Kshatriya rule by a Brahmanical régime

At this time Visvaratha was the Kshatriya king of Kanya Kubja He desired to acquire the status of a Brahman and for this purpose undertook a course of austerities that lasted twelve years During this period which coincided with the period of Vasistha s rule he placed his queen and his son in a hermitage in the Kosala country where they suffered severely from a drought that prevailed throughout the twelve years But Satyavrata though living himself in the utmost misery managed to support them providing them with food from the spoils of his hunting Incidentally Satyavrata added to his crimes by killing a cow which belonged to Vasistha—a crime which Vasistha did not dare to avenge save by dubbing the prince Trisanku —the man of three sins

At last Visvaratha having completed his austerities returned to his kingdom as a Brahman *muni* under the name of Visvamitra and in his gratitude he restored Satyavrata to his kingdom and despite the gods and Vasistha offered sacrifice for him as his priest There was no conflict as soon as Viswamitra took up Satyavrata s cause Vasistha s power collapsed no doubt because the people and especially the Kshatriyas disapproved of Vasistha s rule, and the intrigues by which he had obtained power Visvamitra famous king and famous saint had only to touch that power to break it

As regards the early history of caste this story shows us

(i) How a Kshatriya could become a Brahman

(ii) That Vasistha the most famous of *rishis* was a mere family priest without any temporal power and that

his attempt to usurp it from a Kshatriya king caused resentment

(iii) That outcasting in early days was not, as at present, a mere 'casting out', but involved consorting with a caste of lower degree

(iv) That low castes, then as now, were segregated from other castes and lived in hamlets of their own

(v) We learn, incidentally, that Visvaratha was grandson of Kusika, brother-in-law of Bhargava, and uncle of Jamadagni All were Kshatriyas and yet they are best known as Brahman *rishis*, and founders of Brahmanical *gotras* Brahmanical writers allege that ten of their *gotras* were actually founded by Kshatriyas who 'became' Brahmans That theory would fit the facts so far as Visvaratha himself is concerned he would be the founder of the Visvamitra *gotra* But there is nothing to show that Kusika, Bhargava and Jamadagni also 'became' Brahmans and the fact that these Kshatriya princes have given their names to Brahman *gotras* supports another theory—that the Brahmans occasionally named their *gotras* after their royal Kshatriya masters

(vi) Lastly, the whole tradition confirms the conclusion that can be drawn from the Buddhist records—that in early times the Kshatriya was at the head of society, and that the Brahman was simply his priest

CHAPTER III

CASTE SUBCASTE, AND MARRIAGE

1 The Universality of marriage

Of Hindu males over 15 years, some 85 per cent are married of females of the same age no less than 98 per cent Many are wedded (*byaha*) long before that age, but such marriage is only irrevocable betrothal and the *gauna* ceremony when the wife first goes to her husband does not take place till later Old bachelors and old maids are rare in Hindu society—so rare that in some parts the same word (*randua*) is made to serve both for old bachelor and widower

2 The nature of marriage

Marriage to a Hindu is essentially a religious rite It is a duty which he owes to himself and his ancestors By begetting a virtuous son says Baudhayana 'a man saves himself as well as the seven preceding and seven following generations Saves himself—from hell marriage to a Hindu is the one way of salvation for by it alone can he have legitimate sons who will perform the funeral ceremonies and preserve him from Yama King of the Dead If a Hindu maiden is marriageable but unmarried she brings social disgrace on her family in this world and damnation on her parents in the next

3 Restrictions on marriage

Yet although marriage is an imperative duty for a Hindu there are various customary restrictions which make it difficult for him to choose a mate These are

(*a*) The custom of endogamy which compels him to marry within a certain group This group may be either the caste or subcaste

(*b*) The custom of exogamy which forbids him to marry within a certain group This exogamous group is a subdivision of the endogamous group

(c) The Hindu 'table' of prohibited kin Various castes have various such tables, in some it replaces the restrictions of exogamy, in some it reinforces them The effect is generally to forbid marriage with certain kinds of relative who are not included in the exogamous group

(d) The custom of hypergamy, by which a bride may not marry a man of lower social rank than herself

(e) The custom of virgin marriage, which forbids a man to marry a widow

Save for certain quite exceptional castes, the first of these restrictions is universal Either the second or the third operates in every caste, generally both operate together. The fourth is common The fifth applies to perhaps one-third of the population, i e to most higher castes Endogamy and exogamy both involve segmentation of the caste the other three restrictions do not It will be convenient, therefore, to examine, on broad lines, the general nature of caste segmentation before considering the various restrictions on marriage For various reasons, it is convenient to deal with these in the following order

Exogamy,
Hypergamy,
Endogamy,
Prohibited kin,
Virgin marriage,
Other marriage customs and restrictions [1]

A GENERAL NATURE OF THE SEGMENTATION OF CASTE

4 The subdivisions of caste

At the census of 1891 the subdivisions of caste were recorded in detail, and the resultant lists, published with the report, contain thousands of names of every kind The Jat and Ahir, for instance, were each responsible for over 1,700 entries, the Kurmi for nearly 1,500

[1] The last three are dealt with in Chapter IV The actual rites and ceremonies carried out at marriage are not considered, being outside the scope of this book They are fully described in Crooke's *Tribes and Castes of the N -W P and Oudh*

Judicious pruning would materially reduce these lists which are swollen by such causes as the repetition of the same name in different spellings nevertheless they form a unique document, and afford striking proof of the fertility of the caste system in the development of sub-divisions

5. *The nomenclature of subdivisions*

Nobody has ever attempted a detailed analysis of caste nomenclature nor would such an analysis yield results commensurate to the labour involved But it is necessary to examine its principal features, since the name of a subdivision is generally the only clue that we possess to its origin There are firstly, local[1] eponymous and occupational names Such names are common in most races and point respectively to the original home, the mythical or historical founder or protector and the traditional pursuit of the section concerned Eponymous names are comparatively uncommon apart from the Brahmanical *gotras* which will be separately considered

6. *Cast names*

Secondly there is a category of sectional names which are derived from castes They are extremely common they are usually explained as pointing either to the origin of the section or to some special connexion between it and the caste from which it is named Only the highest and lowest castes are without sections bearing such names the highest because they are either too pure bred to be composed of elements derived from other castes or too proud to admit the possession of such elements the lowest because they are even still comparatively free from Hinduizing influences

( ) Poi ts of the compass—Porabi, Pachhami
(b) Geographical reas or rivers—Madhesiya, Antarvedi Gangapari;
(c) Towns, ancient or modern—Srivastava, Jaunpuriya Jaiswara
(d) Holy sites—Brajbasi, Ajudhyabasi.

Benbansi (Vena) and most names ending in -bansi Sheo Shahi, Todar M ll etc.

Kanghigar (comb-makers), Bazigar (acrobats), Kharadi (t rners) Jauhari (jeweller), etc. Cf Crooke, *Trib s and Cast s f the N W. P and Oudh* Introduction, Chapter IV

7 *Brahmanical names*

There are very few sectional names derived from the Brahman caste The Barhai, Bhat, and Lohar have subcastes which claim Brahmanical descent, and if we remember that there have been many cases of Brahmans taking to trade, we shall be disposed to regard such claims as credible even if unconvincing Other castes with sections which boast a Brahmanical name are very low the Balahar and Basor, for instance, each of which have a subcaste called Bahmangot, the Chamar, Darzi, and Gadariya, each with a section called Bahmaniya It is just possible that Brahmans in the past may have taken to the trades of the Darzi or Gadariya and founded sections in those castes but a more probable explanation of the occurrence of such names in low castes is that the sections concerned took the name in compliment to their teachers during the process of Hinduization

8 *Rajput names*

On the other hand, a large number of castes have sections called by the name of various Rajput clans Some of these, such as the Gujar and Jat, are probably connected by blood with certain branches of the Rajput caste others, such as the Bhoksa, Gara, and Kirar, themselves claim to be of Rajput descent But most of them are functional castes, such as the Barhai, Bhat, Chamar, Darzi, Gadariya, and Kahar, or menial castes, such as the Arakh, Baheliya, Bind, Dhanuk, and Dusadh, in these cases the explanation is, probably, that these sections bear the name of the Rajput septs to which their ancestors were attached as artizans, servants, or helots Only primitive tribes, which never came into contact with Hinduism, or were traditionally antagonistic to the Rajput power, possess no such sections for instance, the Agariya, Bhar, Bhuiya, Dharkar, Kharwar, and Majhwar

9 *Other 'caste' names*

There are also many sections which bear the names of other lower castes e g

Barai Gauriya, Baniya, Gadariya, Ahir, Tamboli,

Beldar	Baheliya, Bind Ghosi Kurmi Luniya, Orh
Bhangi	Chamar Barwar Chhipi, Kayasthbans
Bharbhunja	Kanjar, Kayastha Khattri Lodha Kandu Kahar Teliyabans
Chamar	Domar Kahar Ahir Dusadh
Chhipi	Agarwal, Agrahri Chamar Churihar Darzi Kori
Darzi	Agariya, Agarwal Bhat Chamar Dhanuk Gujar Kayastha, Kol

The word bans which occurs in some of these names probably explains all of them The sections are of the *bans* or stock of the castes after which they are named In other words these castes were built up by accretion from other castes and as most of them are occupational no doubt the accretion was due to the adoption of their occupation by outsiders

There are several pairs of castes each of which possess a section called by the name of the other Such pairs are the Ahir Gujar Barai Tamboli Arakh-Khangar Bhar Dusadh Bhar Pasi and Bind Kewat Cases such as the Barai Tamboli are intelligible enough, both castes are connected with the trade in betel and doubtless were once a single caste In some places such as Gorakhpur Barai and Tamboli are practically used as synonyms even at the present day Some sort of differentiation possibly of function possibly of locality no doubt caused the separation of the two branches according to tradition the Barai is supposed to grow the betel and the Tamboli to sell it whilst the Barai is found chiefly in the Benares Gorakhpur and Fyzabad divisions and the Tamboli elsewhere In other cases the correlation probably points to racial kinship which has been definitely asserted in some cases, such as the Ahir Gujar and Bhar Pasi and suspected in others In the case of the Arakh Khangar there seems to be real confusion In Cawnpore each caste has a section called Bal the Khangars have a legend that the Arakhs are a Khangar offshoot the Arakhs have a section called Khagar or Khangar

Finally Cawnpore Khangars say that across the Jumna Arakhs and Khangars are 'two separate equal castes forming one brotherhood with one *panchayat*, and marrying, eating, and drinking together' —which, if true, can only mean that they are two exogamous branches of a single caste The Khangar is a caste that has risen in the social scale and become Hinduized, very probably it has left the Arakh, a much lower caste, behind in the process

10 Totem names

There are survivals of totemism amongst some aboriginal tribes, such as the Agariya, Baiswar, Bhuiya, Bhuivar, and Dhangar. All these have sections with names derived from plants, animals, etc which members of the section are forbidden to eat These totem groups are exogamous, as totem groups usually are Mr Crooke has discovered sections with plant and animal names in some 24 castes but it is only in a few primitive castes that the totem-name, totem-taboo, and exogamy co-exist

11 Other kinds of sectional names

There are sectional names of other kinds which may be briefly mentioned

(i) The nickname—Kamchor (loafer), Kabutari ('pigeonlike'—a flirter)

(ii) Names connected with a social custom—Byahut (marrying only in the *byah* form, i e marrying only virgins)

(iii) Names referring to origin—Chauhaniya-Misr (Kumhar), Swang and Ghulam (Barwar)

(iv) Names referring to religious belief—Pachpiriya, Mahabiriya

(v) Names recalling castes of the Puranas—Amisht (Amabashtha), Gaharwar (Gahvara), Kewat (Kaivarta), Khasiya (Khasa), Nikhad (Nishada), Tank (Takka) Such survivals, however, are not numerous

12 Nomenclature of exogamous and endogamous groups

As will be seen later, the constitution of a caste is very liable to alteration, groups originally exogamous for this reason or that become endogamous, whilst the reverse process, though less common, also takes place At the present time, therefore, it is impos-

sible to assert that any particular class of name is peculiar to either kind of subdivision but the following general statements can be made

(a) *Local names* —The original Dravidian exogamous group was the village Names of villages small towns, etc in low castes are probably therefore those of original exogamous groups On the other hand names referring to large areas would presuppose a migration in which case distance would quickly make the group endogamous

(b) *Eponymous names* —If the name is that of a real or reputed ancestor the group would originally be exogamous since such groups are or are supposed to be, groups of relatives descended from a common ancestor If, on the other hand it refers to a real or reputed protector the group might be either endogamous or exogamous according to circumstances most often, perhaps, the former since it would imply some sort of separation from the original group

(c) *Occupational names* —These must always connote a separation from the original group as a result of the change of occupation since otherwise there would be no need to take a new name at all and the groups with such names would generally be endogamous from the first

(d) *Caste names* —Where the name connotes a particular descent the groups must have been endogamous from the first since in respect of the group to which it affiliated itself it was so already Where the name merely connotes the existence of a particular relation to the caste in question the group would not necessarily be endogamous and most probably would be exogamous in origin

(e) *Totem names* —These would originally be names of exogamous groups

B EXOGAMY AND HYPERGAMY

13 Exogamy

[1] The exogamous group may be defined as a group of persons related, or who believe themselves to be related, by blood, between whom intermarriage is forbidden The relatives to whom such a prohibition applies will vary according as descent is traced through the father and the mother in Northern India we have only the former case to consider

14 The exogamous groups of early Indian society

The Buddhist records show that the exogamous group amongst the Aryans was the *gotra*, or group of agnates amongst the Dravidians, the totem-group or the village The *gotra* was an exaggerated family, a group of relatives tracing descent from the same ancestor. Whatever be the true origin of totemism, members of totem groups would *regard* themselves as relatives. We know little of the nature of a primitive Dravidian village, but we may perhaps surmise that the idea of the village as an exogamous group dates back to the time when a village was a collection of a few huts in a jungle clearing, built and inhabited by a group of relatives

15 The Brahman gotra [2]

It is usual to write of the *gotra* as peculiar to the Brahman caste, but the Buddhist literature shows that it was an Aryan and not a purely Brahmanical institution The Brahmanical legend names eight original *gotras* descended from the eight sons of Brahma, who are known as *gotrakara rishis*, they occupy, as Mr Crooke says, much the same position as the sons of Jacob did amongst the Jews Only one indubitably descended from such a *rishi*, could found a *gotra* To these eight, were added ten 'Kshatriya' *gotras*, founded by Kshatriyas who became Brahmans, as well as several thousand other *gotras* founded by descendants of the eight *gotra*-

[1] For theories of the origin of exogamy see Crooke, *Tribes and Castes*, Introduction, Chapter IV, and more modern books such as *Frazer's Totemism and Exogamy* and Hartland's *Primitive Paternity*

[2] Cf *J A S B* Vol III (1903)

kara rishis These we may distinguish as subsidiary *gotras* The rule of *gotra* exogamy can now be stated thus There are eighteen groups of which eight consist of a *gotra* plus its subsidiary *gotras* and no man belonging to any one of these groups may marry a woman also belonging to it Every lawgiver insists on this rule which Brahmans universally observe save the hill Brahman who neglects his *gotra* for his *that* a local subdivision

16. The gotra in other castes

As has been stated already the *gotra* was an Aryan institution and this fact explains the Brahmanical story of the foundation of Kshatriya *gotras* A Kshatriya who became a Brahman as Visvamitra did would already belong to a Kshatriya *gotra* and on founding a Brahmanical family would naturally give to it his old Kshatriya *gotra* name None the less the *gotras* to be found in non Brahmanical castes at the present day can not be explained in this way There are very few castes that date back to Aryan times possibly the *gotras* of a few castes of good position such as the Agarwal and other respectable Vaisya groups, the Bhuinhar, Dhusar Bhargava, and Khattri are as old as this but the *gotras* of most groups most certainly are not The usual explanation of their existence is that put forward by Mr Crooke as a caste rises in the social scale, a compliant priest is always ready to discover an appropriate *gotra* for the aspirant No doubt a certain number of *gotras* especially those *gotras* with correct Brahmanical names which are occasionally found in low castes, are new creations of this kind for instance those of the Ojha Lohar or the Kalwar who possess but one *gotra* each and that a Brahmanical *gotra*—the Kasyapa. But in a great majority of cases, the explanation must be different Practically all castes have exogamous groups of various kinds and the commonest vernacular term for these groups is as a matter of fact *got* or *gotra* In other words, the true meaning of the word *gotra* has been extended to cover the exogamous groups of such castes One or two particularly striking instances of this extended

use of the word to connote 'exogamous group' may be mentioned

(*a*) Turkiya Banjaras are Muhammadans, but possess *gotras*, three of them actually have Muhammadan names (Shaikh, Bahlim, and Khilji)

(*b*) One of the Gujar *gotras* is Hun Nothing less Aryan could be imagined.

(*c*) The Gond and Khangar have each a set of totemistic *gotras*

(*d*) The Golapurab's *gotras* are named after villages

Where non-Brahmanical castes possess both a set of exogamous groups and a set of Brahmanical *gotras*, it is the latter which are neglected Rajput clans, for instance, which are themselves exogamous groups, possess *gotras* but ignore them for marriage purposes No clan seems to have more than one,[1] a fact which proves their uselessness, whilst it also calls to mind the theory that modern Rajputs are of non-Aryan descent, and suggests the probability that the *gotras* are due to the intervention of Mr. Crooke's 'compliant priest'[2] The Bhuinhar has a set of *muls* (local divisions), as well as a set of 84 *gotras* the *mul* is alone considered for the purposes of the exogamous law The Dhusar-Bhargava occasionally neglects his *gotra*, but never neglects his *kul*, a subdivision of the *gotra*. The Bhatiyas assert that they are of Kshatriya origin, but because they were connected with trade, no other Kshatriya would form alliances with them They accordingly divided their *gotras* into *nukhs*, or families, each of which was separated by at least 49 degrees from all other *nukhs* But for purposes of marriage the *gotras* are neglected, the *nukhs* are strictly exogamous

Most of these changes were doubtless made, as the Bhatiya made them, to modify the severity of the restrictions involved in the *gotra* system The *gotra* would become in time a very large group, and every subdivision

[1] e g Bharadwaja (Bais), Kasyapa (Rathor, Kachhwaha), Jamadagni (Chauhan), Vatsa (Bachgoti)

[2] Four septs are themselves called by *gotra* names, Gautam, Bharadwaja, Agastwar (Agastya) and Kausik This would suggest that in some cases the modern sept was also the ancient *gotra* All Rajputs call their clans or septs '*got*'

of it would lessen the number of women that a man was forbidden to marry

17 Exogamy and the village

In view of the fact that the exogamous unit of the primitive Dravidian was the village it is curious to find that the villager still looks on a fellow casteman residing in the same village, as in some sense his relative—a *ganw ka bhai* (village brother) as he calls him—and also that in many castes a villager usually goes outside his village for his wife In most cases, all the members of a caste living in the same village probably are, as a matter of fact, members of the same exogamous group which would compel them to go outside it for their brides and in all cases there is that vague relationship of the village to make it desirable

Villagers themselves give another reason for the exogamy of the village They hold it a good thing that a woman once married should not live too near her own relatives If a husband and wife are members of the same village and quarrel then it involves a quarrel between their two families also and sometimes the woman takes the extreme step of abandoning her husband and returning to her old home The avoidance of connubial quarrels is doubtless desirable but it is scarcely sufficient to account for a custom of this kind

18 Hypergamy

The custom of hypergamy introduces an important modification into the marriage laws of many castes Where it prevails the exogamous groups are classified according to their social position and whilst a group of higher rank will take brides from it will not give brides to a group of lower rank The law is found most highly developed amongst Rajputs but it is observed by many other castes, such as the Bhat Byar Dharkar Gujar Jat, Kanaujiya and Jhijhotiya Brahmans Kharwar Khattri and Patwa Indeed amongst all Hindus there is probably a tendency towards hypergamy A curious proof of this fact is provided by the statistics of birthplace in the United Provinces In two successive census reports (1901 and 1911) it is shown clearly firstly that the bulk of persons living

in districts other than that in which they were born are women, secondly, that the migration of these women is due to their marriage and thirdly, that the general trend of this migration is from east to west. As the lower branches of a widespread caste, generally speaking, live in the east of the Provinces, and the higher in the west, the conclusion that hypergamy has something to do with the nature of this 'marriage' migration appears sound

The law of hypergamy greatly complicates the marriage system of the castes who observe it For instance, the Khattris are divided into Dhaighar, Charghar, Baraghar, and Bawanjati A Dhaighar man can take a wife only from the Dhaighar or Charghar groups, whilst a Dhaighar woman can marry only a Dhaighar man The Dhaighars, therefore, are exogamous as regards men and endogamous as regards women Amongst Rajputs, the relative rank of the various clans is carefully determined, every Rajput knows into what clans he may marry a son or daughter If the practice were uniform everywhere, it would be possible to lay down an exact warrant of marriage precedence but a clan ranked high in one district is often ranked low in another, and in the second gives brides to clans from which in the first it accepts them

Hypergamy, amongst groups which are of a rank so low that they find it difficult to obtain wives, produces a shortage of marriageable women, and, consequently, a tendency to neglect the law of endogamy It also produces a deplorable effect on the age when marriage takes place, and on the esteem in which women are held

C. ENDOGAMY

19 The importance of endogamous subcastes

The endogamous group, whether it be caste or subcaste, is a factor of the greatest importance in the caste system Generally speaking, the marriage restrictions govern all other restrictions If a man can marry another man's daughter, he can eat, drink, and smoke with him and he can also meet him in *panchayat* (caste council).

It is necessary therefore to deal with the characteristics of the endogamous subcaste in detail

10. The difference between caste and subcaste endogamy

Caste endogamy is absolutely rigid and immutable permitting no open evasion Sometimes even high castes are compelled by a lack of women to make a practice of taking low caste women as wives but in such cases both the husband and his caste connive at their own deception and if they are willing to ignore custom are very unwilling that the fact should be generally known Gipsy tribes used to recruit from other castes but even they observed the letter of the endogamous law whilst they neglected its spirit For before a recruit could marry man or woman of the tribe he or she was adopted or initiated into it thus becoming a member with full rights Subcaste endogamy in most cases is as rigid as caste endogamy Occasionally a breach of the endogamic law of a subcaste can be condoned by a purificatory sacrifice as amongst the Kumhars and Ahirs of Ghazipur or by a fine as amongst the Telis and Lodhas of Cawnpore but as a rule permanent excommunication is the penalty imposed In 1911 inquiries were made into the endogamous regulations of the subcastes of twenty-one castes [1] and all of them in almost all parts of the Province punish offences against these regulations by permanent excommunication

But though subcaste endogamy is as rigid as caste endogamy it is not so immutable It can be set aside altogether even by Brahmans Saraswats have taken brides from Gaurs Gaurs and Kanaujiyas from Sanadhs Kanaujiyas also from Jhijhotiyas The Ahar and Ahir are two castes closely akin Being separated by a long standing feud they do not intermarry but attempts have lately been made to compose the quarrel and resume intermarriage The Jadubansi and the Nandbansi subcastes of Ahir formerly endogamous, are said to be on the way to amalgamation and intermarriage Further

[1] Ahir Babeliya Bharbhunja, Bhat, Bhuinhar Chamar Dhanuk, Dom, Gadariya, Kahar Kayastha, Khatik, Koeri Kori Kumhar Kurmi Mali, Nai, Pasi Sonar and Teli.

the marriage regulations of subcastes vary from place to place In South Cawnpore, the Laungbarsa subcaste of Dhanuks finds its wives in its own ranks, but also gives girls to the Badhiks In East Cawnpore, it is endogamous In North-East Cawnpore, it takes girls from three *subcastes and exchanges them with a fourth.* In North-West Cawnpore, it marries in its own ranks, exchanges girls with one subcaste and takes them from another and all these variations take place within the boundaries of a single district of ordinary size

21 Varieties of endogamous sections

The system of marriage sections in most castes is perfectly simple The caste is divided into endogamous groups these are occasionally further subdivided into smaller groups of the same nature finally the endogamous subcaste or sub-subcaste is broken up into exogamous sections But some castes have systems that are much more complex The endogamous and exogamous sections are often cross-divisions. The Agarwal, for instance, is divided up into eighteen exogamous *gotras,* and also into two endogamous sections known as Dasa (tens) and Bisa (twenties) Representatives of both the 'tens' and 'twenties' are found in each *gotra,* and the rule of marriage is that the Dasa of one *gotra* may only marry a Dasa of another *gotra* The Kanaujiya Brahman's marriage system is of the same nature, but even more complicated. The subcaste consists of a number of exogamous *gotras* These *gotras* are divided into *kuls* or families, also exogamous These *kuls* are grouped together in three classes known as Khatkul, Panchadari, and Dhakra which classes are endogamous in precisely the same way as the Dasa and Bisa sections of the Agarwal But that is not all, for though a Khatkul may only marry a Khatkul as his first wife, he *must* marry a Panchadari as his second wife, a curious restricted rule of hypergamy. Should he defy convention and marry a Panchadari as his first wife, then he sinks to the rank of a Panchadari Strangest of all, the Bhar in Azamgarh is divided into two exogamous sections, the Patait and Khuntait. but families who do not keep pigs will not

marry with families who do so that there are two endogamous sections which do not even possess a name

22 *The formation of endogamous group*

Endogamous groups, whether castes or subcastes, are the result of one of two processes—accretion or fission In earlier days accretion was probably the usual process most of the old guilds must have been formed in this way A goldsmith guild would be formed let us suppose amongst Vaisyas to which Kshatriya goldsmiths Brahman goldsmiths Sudra goldsmiths would affiliate themselves The process by which the goldsmiths of one locality united themselves to the goldsmiths of another locality until there was one widespread caste of Sonars was also a process of accretion At the present day accretion only occurs as the result of a previous fission since the whole population is already divided up into castes, clearly no new caste or subcaste can be formed save by means of a split in an already existing caste Cases of such accretion do occur a group breaks off from its parent caste and attaches itself to another caste, but the transfer is so slow as to be usually imperceptible *Only one such case was reported in 1911*: some Gual Nats took to trade and adopted the designation of Badi Banjara There can be no doubt of the *transfer for the Badi Banjara s women still occasionally* dance in public, a habit preserved from the time when they were Gual Nats and his *gotra* (Dharmsoti) is that of the Gual Nats

23 *The nature and causes of fission*

The formation of new subcastes by fission is now, as always, going on every day It is a popular idea that caste is immutable yet a comparison of the past with the present or of two periods in the past makes it abundantly clear that caste is, on the contrary, *varium et mutabile semper* And caste has become no more immutable with time changes are always in progress, new endogamous groups are constantly being created the process of fission is ever in operation Occasionally, as we have just seen the group having left its parent caste, transfers itself as a new section to some other caste[1] at

other times, it merely forms one more subdivision within its own caste, most frequently perhaps, it severs itself altogether, becoming an independent caste The causes which produce the change may vary, but the process is always the same, and in the following paragraphs examples of all these kinds of change are stated indifferently A very trivial cause suffices to produce fission within a caste In the past, perhaps the most fruitful of all causes was a change of locality Nowadays, when the effect of distance is diminished by better communications, such a change matters little But a change of occupation, a change of social or religious customs, a change involving pollution, increased prosperity, a caste quarrel about the most trivial matter—all these have led in the past, and most of them still lead from time to time, to the formation of new endogamous groups

24 *Local subcastes*

Many local subcastes are indigenous to the locality whose name they bear They grew up independently of each other, and with the improvement of communications combined to form a caste whilst still preserving their endogamy From this it follows that local subcastes may preserve racial differences [1] Other subcastes were the result of migration to a new settlement, where, by reason of distance from their home, the settlers were compelled to become endogamous Many castes and subcastes possess traditions of an original home, which serves to show that the foundation of distant settlements was a common occurrence A few actually connect their endogamous rules with their migration, the Sarwariya Brahmans ascribe their origin to the fact that when their ancestors were sent to perform the *jagiya* (purificatory ceremony) for Rama after he had killed Rawan, they accepted '*dan*', or part of the sacrificial offering,[2] and, on their return, the Kanaujiyas, to whom they belonged, refused to

[1] Cf *Census Report, U P*, 1891, p 269, and ditto, 1901, p 241, for the connexion of Brahman subcastes with dialect

[2] Any Brahman may accept *dakshina*, which is simply a fee for services rendered, no Brahman of good status will accept *dan*, which is anything definitely forming part of the sacrificial or ceremonial offering

receive them and compelled them to settle across the Sarju river whence the name Sarwariya (=Sarjupariya)

25 *Change of occupation*

Cases of fission due to change of occupation have always been common The following are instances

(i) Belwars claim to be Sanadh Brahmans, and the evidence to support their claim seems satisfactory They took to dealing in cattle, and cattle carried commodities, which caused their separation Some Hardoi Belwars have given up these pursuits and are again intermarrying with Sanadhs

(ii) In Mainpuri Ahirs are divided into Dwijat (twice born) and Sudras, which latter subcaste is subdivided into Uttam and Adham The Sudras have taken to menial service

(iii) Kuta Banjaras are an occupational offshoot that have taken to the occupation of husking rice

(iv) Kayastha Mochis, Kayastha Darzis, Kayastha Bharbhunjas and Kayastha-Senduriyas, claim to be Kayasthas who have taken to harness-making tailoring grain-parching and the trade in red lead respectively

(v) In Moradabad Chamar Julahas also called Bhuiyars are an occupational offshoot of the Jatiya Chamars, who have become weavers

(vi) Phansiyas are Moradabad Pasis who now sell fruit

(vii) Singhariyas are an occupational offshoot of uncertain origin which grows groundnuts They are probably ex Kahars or Kachhis

(viii) Gidhiyas are an occupational group of hunters broken off from the Bawariyas

(ix) In Moradabad there are Chaudhri Kabutari and Kalabaz Nats, all akin The Chaudhris are Kabutaris who gave up dancing and took to agriculture the Kalabaz are Kabutaris who took to tumbling

(x) The Khatiks have three occupational subcastes in Cawnpore the Rajgar (masons) Sombatta (rope makers) and Mewafarosh (fruit-sellers) A fourth subcaste drawn from all three is now in the making which sells pork and is known as Bekanwala (bacon)

All these are relatively new instances of fission, having been reported for the first time at the census of 1911, there are many older cases to be found in Mr Crooke's pages, such as the Balahar, Bansphor, Baghban, Gharuk, and Mochi

26 Changes in social practices

A Byahut subcaste is found in several castes, such as the Kalwar, Lohar, Nai, and Teli · its origin is the result of the abandonment of the practice of widow marriage The Basor, Bansphor, Domar, and Dharkar, are all branches of the Dom tribe which seceded from it on abandoning nomadic habits for a settled mode of life The Purbi and Pachhimi Sonars of Benares are divided on the subject of widow marriage, the Baiswar and Jaiswar Kurmis of Sitapur are despised by other sections because they follow that custom In Jhansi, the Sadh Kori is superior to other Koris because he does not eat flesh The Kayastha-Darzis and Kayastha-Senduriyas try to account for their separation by asserting that they have become total abstainers But nowadays, instances of fission due to a change in social practices are uncommon, a subcaste as it rises in the social scale, will separate itself from its humble relatives, and give up certain customs which are not consonant with its newly acquired dignity but the change of custom is the result of the fission and not its cause

27 Changes due to pollution and low origin

Subcastes formed in consequence of changes due to pollution and low origin are naturally more common The following are instances.

(1) In Sitapur, the Dhuniyas[1] have three subcastes, Mehtariya, Khwaja-Mansuri and Qassaiya The last has taken to butcher's work, the other two consequently refuse to associate with it Both of these two claim the higher status the Mansuri say that the Mehtariya are descended from a Mansuri by a female sweeper (*mehtarani*), the Mehtariya say the Mansuri are lower than themselves because they keep pigs

[1] A Muhammadan caste

(ii) The Kurmiya Ahirs of Hardoi the Jatiya Chamars and Nikhar Gadariyas have all lost rank because they are the offspring of a union between two persons of different castes.

(iii) The Gola Agariya is a Luniya subcaste which claims Rajput origin it is clearly the same as Mr Crooke s Agaris, who are also known as Gola Thakur (i.e bastard Rajput)

(iv) In Cawnpore were found some Thakur Arakhs, also obviously the offspring of a mixed union It may be added that such persons if not admitted (as they sometimes are) into full caste rights intermarry amongst themselves

(v) The Gual Ahir in Bijnor ranks low because legend traces his descent to the cattleherds of the true Ahirs, who owned the cattle

(vi) The Dhaigar Gadariya is despised because he has adopted some Muhammadan customs

(vii) The Gaur Kayasthas in service at the Delhi Court under Nasiruddin Mahmud made great friends with some Bhatnagar Kayasthas, and finally invited the latter to eat with them But most of them refused to accept a return invitation and excommunicated some of their number who proved more complaisant The Bhatnagars appealed to the Emperor to compel the Gaurs to eat with them The Gaurs fled to Budaun save one pregnant woman who took refuge with a Brahman and ultimately gave her son in marriage to his daughter Those that fled to Budaun were haled back to Delhi and ordered to eat with the Bhatnagars Some Budaun Brahmans tried to save them by passing them off as their own relatives but the Muhammadan officials, who apparently knew something about caste custom defeated this move by insisting that these Brahmans should eat from the same cooking place as their protégés Thereupon to the disgust of the Bhatnagars, the Emperor dismissed their complaint and in the end both the Bhatnagar and Gaur groups broke up into endogamous sections The Bhatnagars were subdivided into the Khas Bhatnagars who had not and the Gaur Bhatnagars who had, eaten with

the Gaurs The Gaur group was subdivided into (*a*) the true Gaurs, who were not concerned in this embroglio, (*b*) the Gaurs who had eaten with the Bhatnagars, (*c*) those who had eaten with the Budaun Brahmans, and (*d*) those who re-admitted to caste rights the woman who took refuge with the Brahman.[1]

28 Change due to increased prosperity

Changes due to increased prosperity are not very common The Sainthwar subcaste of Kurmis has lately become a separate caste, chiefly because of the rise of its leading family (of Padrauna in Gorakhpur) it has also given up widow-marriage The prosperous Kalwar of the present day insists on calling himself a Mahajan—merely, it seems, because it sounds better But a prosperous caste usually takes a different line It endeavours to push itself into the ranks of a higher class, such as the Kshatriya Kayasthas claim to be 'Chitraguptabansi' Kshatriyas, Kurmis generally, Mair and Tank Sonars, Gadariyas and Karnwals, all claim the same exalted lineage. Kalwars, Kandus, and Halwais strive to affiliate themselves to the Vaisyas, whilst Darzis and Bharbhunjas are beginning to set up a general claim to be Kayasthas These are all new instances there are many older ones

29 Formation of subcastes due to quarrels

Naturally quarrels occurred in many of the 'splits' mentioned above, and it is unnecessary to give many examples One, however, which is of relatively recent date, may be given The facts are instructive in many ways, and show how trivial the dissensions can be which lead to the formation of subcastes

In Lucknow[2] there was a subcaste of Khatiks consisting of three *ghols*, or groups, known as Manikpur, Jaiswala and Dalmau. They intermarried, ate together, and met together in *panchayat* under the presidency of

[1] See appendix to this chapter, where the story is told in full detail

[2] The facts were reported in a form which left much unexplained To avoid obscurity I have stated them as it seems to me they probably occurred The original statement and my reasons for interpreting it as above will be found in *Census Report, U P*, 1911, pp 345-6

their *chaudhris* or headmen Twenty years ago each group had one *chaudhri* but now Jaiswala has three and Manikpur two The quarrel or rather the series of quarrels, was as follows Firstly a woman (her *ghol* is not given) peddled fruit about the streets Two brethren ordered her to desist from the practice which is derogatory to the caste s dignity women should only sell in shops Her husband and she proved contumacious and finally their own *ghol* acting singly outcasted the man The Dalmau *ghol* however dissenting from this action admitted the husband to communion with themselves upon payment of a fine of Rs 80 in lieu of excommunication Secondly a man (the *ghol* is again not given) was excommunicated by his own *ghol* acting alone and while his case was under trial the Jaiswala *chaudhris* invited him to dinner by mistake Thereupon the three *ghols* acting in concert fined the *chaudhris* Rs 30 Lastly fines had accumulated and it was decided to hold a *katha* (sacred recitation) The Dalmau *chaudhri* said he preferred to have his share of the money but the Manikpur *chaudhris* (who seem to have kept the joint purse) refused taking up the attitude that there was going to be a *katha* to which the Dalmau people could come or not as they liked The matter at this stage was brought into court meanwhile the three *ghols* ceased to intermarry so that one endogamous subcaste split into three endogamous groups It will be noted that in all these quarrels *ghol* was pitted against *ghol*

30. Subcast s due t change of religion

If in any caste a group should adopt some new or unusual worship of which other members do not approve one would expect that group to break off and become an endogamous subcaste That such subcastes are uncommon is due to the tolerance of the Hindu who troubles himself little about a man s beliefs and worships —much less than he troubles about what and with whom he eats and whom he marries We do however find the Mahabiriya and Pachpiriya subcastes amongst Telis the latter also amongst Halwais, the Sadh amongst Kons, and the Nanakshahi amongst Barhais Bhangis,

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

The Gaur and Bhatnagar Kayasthas

1200–1260 A.D.

After the conquest of Bengal by Bakhtiyár Khilji about 1200 A D the Gaur Kayasthas learnt that some persons of the Bhatnagar Subcaste were in the Muhammadan service and the two bodies began to amalgamate and some of the Gaur Kayasthas also took service with the foreigner Finally they adopted from the Bhatnagars the Bam Margi or left-hand worship and the veneration for Bhairava Chakra and began to eat with them So the Bhatnagars invited the Gaurs to eat *kachhi* with them and though there was no intermarriage between the two clans, the Bhatnagars came and ate *kachhi* at the houses of the Gaurs but when the Bhatnagars invited the Gaurs to pay them the same compliment they refused At this the Bhatnagars took extreme offence and when some of the Gaurs, who were friendly to them did eat *kachhi* with them their more scrupulous brethren excommunicated them At that time Nasiruddin was Emperor of Delhi and he had both Gaur and Bhatnagar Kayasthas in his service When the Delhi branch of the Bhatnagars heard of these events they determined to excommunicate their Eastern brethren unless the Gaurs would agree to eat *kachhi* with them and pressure was brought to bear by the Muhammadan Emperor to secure this object In the end some Gaurs did eat with the Bhatnagars, and were hence called Gaur Bhatnagari while other more scrupulous Gaurs fled from Delhi in preference to eating with the Bhatnagars One of them was a woman far gone in pregnancy She took refuge in the house of a Brahman and when her son was born and grew up the Brahman married his daughter to him The remaining Gaurs went to Budaun and settled there Hearing of this, the Delhi Bhatnagars again complained to the Emperor

and he sent officers to bring the Budaun Gaurs and force them to eat with the Bhatnagars They implored the help of their Brahman friends, and, in order to protect them, the Brahmans invested them with the Brahmanical cord, and when they were asked said that these Kayasthas were their brethren The royal officers were not satisfied with this statement and forced the Brahmans to eat with these Gaur Kayasthas on the same cooking-place (*chauka*) On this, to the great disgust of the Bhatnagars, the Emperor dismissed their complaint, and in their anger the Bhatnagars excommunicated their brethren, and thus there came to be two classes of Bhatnagars—the Khas or 'real' Bhatnagars, who had held no communion with the Gaurs, and the Gaur Bhatnagars, who had eaten with them And for the same reason there came to be four sections of the Gaurs—*first*, the real Gaurs, who held offices on the Bengal frontier, such as at Nizamabad, Jaunpur, and other places, *secondly*, those who had eaten *kachhi* with the Bhatnagars, *thirdly*, those who were admitted into communion by the Budaun Brahmans; and *fourthly*, those who had admitted to caste rights the woman whose son was born in the Brahman's house [1]

[1] (Taken—with slight adaptations—from Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N.-W P and Oudh*, Vol III, pp 192-193)

CHAPTER IV

CASTE SUBCASTE AND MARRIAGE—*contd*

D PROHIBITED KIN

1 Prohibited degrees

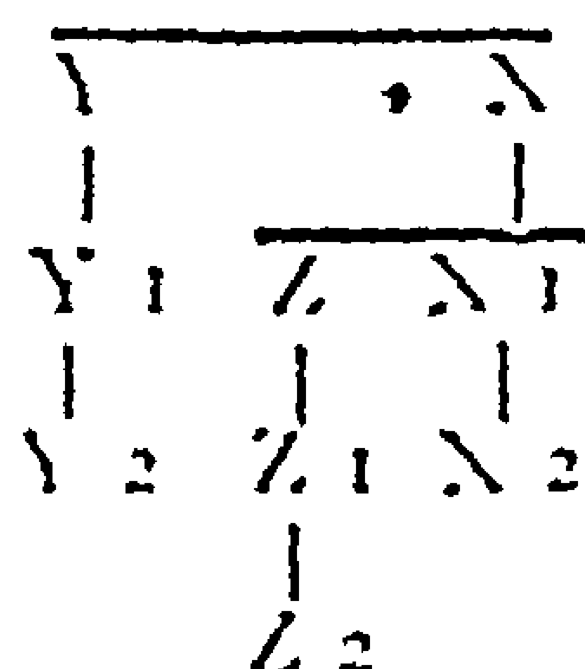
The law which prevents marriage within the exogamous group in a patriarchal system does not prevent a man from contracting unions with very close relatives through his mother sister and daughter He could marry his mother's sister his sister s daughter or even his daughter s daughter and any of his cousins save the daughter of his father s brother Marriages of this kind form the subject of various special rules which have the effect of bringing certain relatives within the prohibited degrees Castes which have no exogamous groups rely entirely on such rules

Various rules of prohibited degrees

(a) *The sapinda rule* All castes which follow Hindu Law—i e all castes of good position—are bound by its *sapinda* rule This prohibits the union of any two persons who have a common ancestor not more than six degrees removed on the male side or four degrees removed on the female side This rule is said to exclude 2 121 kinds of relative the table of kindred of the Anglican Church excludes 30 of which 15 presuppose a former marriage It is unnecessarily wide from a practical point of view many of these relatives would not be available for matrimonial purposes, since they would be dead It is excess of caution to forbid a man to marry his great-great-grandaunt

(b) *The avuncular rule* Many lower castes such as the Barai Bharbhunja, Bhuivar Byar Chero Dangi and Dhuniya are bound by a rule which forbids unions with any person in the line of the paternal and maternal uncle and aunt (*chachera mamera phuphera mausera*) This

bars all marriages between any kind of uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew It also bars all marriages between all first cousins It also bars a marriage between a man and any descendant of any of his first cousins, or between a woman and any descendant of any of her first cousins But it would not bar marriage between cousins more distant than this, as the following table shows (It is worked out only for the paternal aunt, but *mutatis mutandis*, would apply to any other 'avuncular' line)



(X, X 1, X 2, are males Y, Y 1, Y 2, Z, Z 1, Z 2 are females)

Here X could not marry Y 1, since he is her mother's brother but he could apparently marry Y 2, since there is no direct 'avuncular' relation between them he is not Y 2's mother's brother or father's brother, or in either of their lines X 1 could not marry Y, since she is his father's sister, or Y 1 or Y 2, since they are in the line of his father's sister He could not marry Z 1, but could marry Z 2, being in the same relation respectively to Z 1 and Z 2 as X is to Y 1 and Y 2 respectively X 2 could not marry Z, Z 1 or Z 2, for the same reason that X 1 could not marry Y, Y 1 or Y 2 But X 2 could apparently marry Y, Y 1 or Y 2 who are not in the line of his father's sister, but of his grandfather's sister In theory, therefore, this rule is much less stringent than the '*sapinda*' rule in practice, of course, the only marriage of those described that could in normal circumstances occur (especially as marriage in India takes place at a very early age) is that between X 2 and Y 2—i e. between second cousins It is, therefore, quite stringent enough especially when it is remembered that wherever there are exogamous groups, all relatives on the father's side and

through a male would be excluded If for instance Y and Y 1 were males in the above genealogy instead of females, X 2 could not marry Y 2

(c) *The rule barring the group or family with the line of paternal aunt and maternal uncle* Some castes bar marriage in the line of the paternal aunt and maternal uncle and also either within a man s own family, or within his exogamous group This rule in its narrower form would have much the same effect as the avuncular rule standing alone in its wider form it would have much the same effect as the avuncular rule together with the exogamous group—save that in both cases it would throw open the line of the mother s sister In its narrower form it is followed by such castes as the Baheliya, Bar hai Bhar Dhanuk, and Kurmi they are castes that have no exogamous groups In its wider form it is observed by the Bansphor Bhat Chai Dhangar Dharkar Dom Dusadh Kharwar and Kol

(d) *The memory of man rule* This rule, which is perhaps more widely followed than any save the *sapinda* rule, prohibits marriage between any two families so long as memory of any former intermarriage exists As memory in such a matter is always long enough to cover sixty years and might easily cover a century this rule obviously excludes all near and many distant relatives

(e) *The hypergamy rule* The above rule, in a few castes, takes the form that no man may take a bride from any family to which his own family has given a bride within the memory of man This rule depends on the principle of hypergamy already explained Castes that observe this rule are the Arakh and Baiswar the Aheriya joins it to another rule prohibiting all kinds of cousin marriage

A few other special cases may be mentioned

(i) The Agariya s law is very lax He is content with the law of the exogamous group consequently most kinds both of cousin marriage and marriage with a sister s daughter are permitted

(ii) The Ahir in western districts prohibits marriage in the *gotras* of all four grandparents, a very wide law

(iii) The Bajgi excludes the group and the *mamera* line, so that marriage in the line of father's sister and mother's sister is possible

(iv) The Balahar, Ghasiya, and Gujar exclude the group and the sister's line, thus permitting marriage with all kinds of cousins save the father's brother's child

(v) The Bind, Kachhi, Kisan, and Lodha forbid the marriage of daughters into any section or family in which a son is married The Basor forbids the marriage of daughters into the section or family of their mother Both these rules are based on the principle of hypergamy, by which a woman must marry into a section higher than her own in social standing If, therefore, a man in section A has taken a wife from section B, section B is the lower of the two, and no woman of section A can marry into it

3 The wife's sister

The case of the wife's sister is covered by none of the systems mentioned above, and has a special rule of its own Firstly, no man may marry two sisters at once This rule is widely followed there are a few exceptions (e g the Bhulyar, Byar, and Chamar), but in such cases the second sister can only be married with the consent of the first wife And, secondly, after the death of his wife, a man may marry *en secondes noces* her younger but not her elder sister. This rule seems to depend on an ancient custom which enjoins that the elder child should always be married before his or her junior [1]

E VIRGIN MARRIAGE

4 The custom of virgin marriage

It has been said that marriage is a religious rite. In the case of women, it is also a rite the effects of which are indelible, no woman can undergo it more than once And strict Hindus consequently debar all their widows from contracting a second union, thereby imposing a very serious restriction on a man's choice of a

[1] The custom explains the Leah-Rachel story (Genesis, xxix 26)

mate Though this prohibition naturally follows from the principle mentioned above the date at which it was first promulgated is obscure It was unknown to the Vedas and the early lawgivers Manu is a strong authority for it, but Mr Mayne in his book on Hindu law has made it clear that Manu's text on this point has been altered Act XV of 1856 permitted all widows to remarry but its effect on the prohibition of widow marriage has been small Sir Richard Burn in 1901 estimated that the prohibition was observed by the first five groups of his social system—namely by the Brahmans and allied castes the Rajputs and allied castes, the Vaisya castes of good standing and certain other castes trying to rise in the social scale for one of the outward *and visible signs of the inward and spiritual grace that* leads to Hinduism is the abolition of the practice of widow marriage Sir Richard Burn however probably underestimated the facts for a number of castes such as the Tamboli Kasaundhan Kalwar Lohar Nai Sonar, and Teli possess subcastes which forbid it It may be taken that fully one-third of the total Hindu population does *not permit its widows to marry and that this figure tends* to increase

Widow marriage even amongst castes that permit it, is subject to further restrictions of its own

5 *The levirate* The most important of these depends on the well-known levirate custom, by which a younger brother takes his eldest brother's widow to wife A comparison of the pages of Mr Crooke's work on the tribes and castes of the province with reports received in 1911 shows that the custom is found in some seventy castes [1] According to Mr Crooke's account only a minority of castes made the levirate compulsory even in his day (1895) to-day it is universally optional [2] The

[1] Namely all the forty-seven castes mentioned in the index to Crooke's work, under the head Widow marriage except the Bari, Kurmi, Baheliya Barai and Kathiyara with the Bajgi Balai Bharbhunja Bhishti Banjara Beriya, Bhoksa, Bhangi Bishnoi, Beldar Khagi-Chauhan, Dom, Khairwa, Khagi Kanaujiya, Kachhi Lodha, Manihar Tawaif Mirasi Mula Turk Teli, Kanjar Dhuniya, Julaha, Murao and Ghogar

[2] Except possibly in the Kanjar caste. I have only met two cases of the levirate myself: it seems to be legal but uncommon.

levir need not marry the widow unless he wants to do so the widow can marry somebody else, or nobody, though, in a number of castes, such as the Ahir, Bahelíya, Bansphor, Chamar, Dharkar, Korwa, and Mallah, she must, failing the levir, marry only a widower The present position seems to be, therefore, that of all men available to the widow as a second husband, the levir is merely *primus inter pares* The levirate and widow marriage tend to disappear together as a caste rises in the social scale this has happened in both the Kurmi and Bari castes, which possessed these customs in Mr Crooke's time, but do so no longer

6 *Restrictions on the levirate*

Usually, in India as in other parts of the world, a widow can only marry her late husband's younger brother (*dewar*), not his elder brother (*jeth*) This is a well established rule in Australia, Indonesia, and India,[1] there appear to be only two exceptions in southern India and one in Indonesia In Africa it is much more common to find the *jeth* marrying the younger brother's wife (*deorani*) At the 1911 census, however, information was received which seems to show that the prohibition against the *jeth* is less widespread than was formerly supposed Most of the castes which possess this abnormal custom are themselves abnormal They are the Kanmail, Manihar, Tawaif, Turk, Mula, Ghogar, Bari, with the Bishnoi and Bhangi (some subcastes only), the Mirasi, with whom the levirate in either form is legal but unusual, and the Kanjar, who allows the *jeth* to marry his *deorani* but regards the union as incorrect Of these castes seven are Muhammadan, namely the first six and the Mirasi The Tawaif are dancing girls, the Mirasi provide the dancing girls' music, the Kanmail, Bhangi, and Kanjar are very low castes and the Bishnoi is an extraordinary sectarian caste Abnormalities in castes so abnormal cannot be regarded as very important

[1] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910)—references under 'Levirate' in Vols I and II up to p 354

Widow right of inheritance on remarriage

Whenever a widow refuses to marry an available levir and marries somebody else, there are always certain conditions attached to her doing so She loses all claims of maintenance or inheritance in her first husband s family she has to give up her children by him to that family and the new husband has always to pay a bride price to his predecessor s relations It is important also to notice that widow marriage and the levirate almost always co-exist a fact which suggests a causal connexion The evidence suggests that the levirate was originally the only possible form of marriage of a widow and that the restriction was gradually relaxed In the United Provinces thirty years ago there were still castes in which the widow had to marry her brother in law if one existed Elsewhere in more primitive societies the evidence is much stronger In Australia the widow as a rule must marry the levir if there is one and may marry nobody else if there is not Throughout the four volumes of Sir James Frazer s work *Totemism and Exogamy* I can only find five cases where widow marriage is permitted and the levirate forbidden; one of these is in Australia, three in Mysore, and one in Assam

8 The modern levirate and the ancient niyoga

The levirate as it now exists must not be confused with the *niyoga* custom of which Manu and other lawgivers write [2] The *niyoga* resembled the Jewish custom described in Leviticus the brother in law took his widowed sister in law to wife *only* if she was childless, and for the express purpose of raising up a son and heir to his deceased brother The marriage had to be expressly sanctioned by the husband before his death by a relative or *guru* (spiritual guide) and as soon as its object was achieved the connexion ceased The levirate of the present day is quite different the widow marries her *dewar* whether she is childless or not

Frazer *Totemism and Exogamy*—references under Levirate in V. I. I.

Manu *Institutes* IX. 59, et sq ; Gautama *Institutes* XVIII. 4-5 etc. etc.

the fiction of raising up seed is ignored, and the connexion is permanent

F. OTHER MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND RESTRICTIONS

9 *Polygamy*

We may here pause to compare western and Hindu ideas on the matter of marriage it will be the easiest way of bringing home to the reader the 'truth about marriage' amongst Hindus In the west, marriage is by no means universal indeed, it is reprobated unless a man can comfortably or sufficiently support a wife Amongst Hindus it is so universal, that the only classes who remain unwed are faqirs and other celibates who do not want to marry, and men who cannot find wives owing to the shortage of women, which in the United Provinces is considerable (915 women to 1,000 men in 1911) In the west, a bachelor can marry any woman in the world, save fifteen kinds of relatives In India, what with restrictions of endogamy, exogamy and hypergamy, with far-reaching prohibited degrees and the disability of widows to remarry, a man's choice in the biggest caste is limited to a few thousands, and in the smaller castes to a few hundreds or even tens

10 *Monogamy the more usual*

As some compensation for all these restrictions the Hindu has the dubious advantage of being able to wed more wives at a time than one In theory polygamy is legal for all Hindus, but in practice it is uncommon in 1911 there were only 1,009 married women to 1,000 married men Poverty is a universal impediment to polygamy only the comparatively well-to-do can afford more than a single wife Hindus of the better class rarely contract a second union in the lifetime of the first wife, save in exceptional circumstances, such as the first wife's barrenness or her failure to bear a son Ahirs, Baheliyas, Baris, Barais, Bhatiyas and many other castes also permit a second marriage in the case of infidelity on the part of the first wife usually the permission of the tribal council is required Some castes limit the total number of wives for instance, amongst Audhiyas, Barwars,

Bhatiyas and Bhoksas the figure is two, amongst Bhotiyas three, and amongst Aheriyas four Amongst Agrahris, Bhars, Bhuiyars Biyars and some Bhangi subcastes the sanction of the first wife is required to a second marriage A few primitive castes consider polygamy desirable Majhwars, Doms, and Kols alike have as many wives as they can support Generally the senior wife has a position of pre-eminence in the household she is often known as *jethi mehraru*

ii Unusual forms of marriage—polyandry

Polyandry has never been common in the United Provinces[2] certain castes once suspected of the practice have long abandoned it Sir Richard Burn in 1901 made enquiries that showed it to persist in the Jaunsar Barwar hill tracts whilst in 1911 I received information which pointed to its existence on the confines of Tibet in the Damar pargana of Almora According to Sir Richard Burn the joint husbands were always brothers the eldest brother was the real husband the others merely occasional substitutes in his absence If a brother married a wife of his own he did not lose his share in the joint wife, unless he separated from the family and took his share of the property Occasionally a set of brothers shared several wives in common—an instance of what Sir James Frazer calls group marriage [1] The custom is probably not an Indian custom but an imitation of the polyandry of Tibet which it much resembles

i Marriage by capture

One of the earliest methods of getting a wife was to steal one Marriage by capture was a widespread custom of which history and mythology record many instances The Aryans followed it for the Rakshasa form of marriage was simply marriage by capture

[1] *Totemism and Exogamy* Vol. I

For instance the Homeric story of Achilles and Briseis, and the rape of the Sabine women. See also Deuteronomy xx. 14; Judges, v 30; xxi. 8-14, 21 23.

[2] The seizure of a maiden by force from her house. after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in the battle. I the marriage called Rakshasa. Manu, *Institutes* iii. 33. Significantly enough, this type of marriage was legal for the Kshatriya or military class.

Even in modern times, it occurs when Nats, Beriyas and other gipsy tribes kidnap women from other castes. But stealing a wife is apt to be a risky process and failing it, the simplest method of getting a wife is to buy one. Barter was the original method of getting what one wanted and it is not, therefore, surprising to find that amongst primitive castes men even yet obtain wives by exchanging sisters or other kinswomen. The custom is called *gurawat* or *adala badala*. Marriage by exchange still exists amongst Barhais, Bhuiyas, Dharkars, Ghasiyas, Meos, Musahars, and Tarkihars whilst in 1911 it was reported that amongst the Chhipis of Meerut, a man will only give his son in marriage to another family, if that family finds a bridegroom for his daughter.

In the type of marriage called 'beena', the bridegroom goes to live with the bride's family, and
13 *Beena marriage* works as their servant for a certain period before he marries her. Hartland in his book *Primitive Paternity*,[1] refers the custom to the matriarchate, since under that system the husband would live in his wife's house, and being there, would naturally work there. Westermarck, in his *History of Human Marriage*,[2] regards it as merely one form of marriage by purchase or by barter the bridegroom pays for his bride in service instead of in cash or in kind. At the present day it is merely a device which enables a man to get a wife without paying a bride price. During his service, which usually lasts three years, the bridegroom has no rights over his prospective bride, and no claim on her father's property all he gets is maintenance. The custom is found amongst certain low castes—Bhuiyar, Bind, Chero, Ghasiya, Gond, Kharwar, Majhwar, and Parahiya—and also in the hills. It is known as *gharjanwai*, *gharjaiyan*, or *ghardamada*, all of which mean 'the son-in-law in the house'.[3]

[1] Vol II, Chapter I (1909).

[2] Chapter XVII (1901).

[3] The union of Jacob to Leah is a good instance of *beena* marriage, but not his union to Rachel for Jacob had to serve seven years before he wed Leah, but wed Rachel before his second period of service began (Genesis, xxix 21-28). The story is also instructive in other ways.

14. Marriage by purchase. From marriage by exchange to marriage by purchase is a natural sequence. The purchase may be either of the bride or of the bridegroom. The payment of a bride price is forbidden by Hindu law, but the law of supply and demand operates in the marriage as in other markets, and a bridegroom who cannot get anybody to give him a bride must buy one. Such cases are, however, rare, and though the payment of a bride price is common amongst low castes, it no longer forms a business transaction. The price has no connexion with the value of the bride; its amount is fixed by tribal custom, and is generally so small that it is obviously a survival from a time when the purchasing power of money was greater than it is now.

The bridegroom price takes the form of a dowry with the bride and is usual among the better classes. It is partly at all events the result of hypergamy. The bride's family are necessarily of inferior social position and have to pay for marrying her to a man above her in rank, whilst they also desire to make a show of wealth as a set-off to the bridegroom's social advantages. If the bride is herself of high rank, it is often difficult to find her a husband of still higher rank, and her family have to pay accordingly. Normally, however, dowries in the United Provinces are not excessive, though extravagant enough; the marriage ceremonies, however, eat up a great deal of money.

15. The bride price or dowry. The bride price always takes the form of a sum of money and presents, usually clothes and food, sometimes also ornaments. The following castes pay a bride price for their brides; the cash sum, where known to me, is mentioned.

(i) Laban was Jacob's mother's brother; the case was therefore one of cousin marriage and may also have been a case of the matriarchate; (ii) Laban, as his excuse for giving Leah and not Rachel to Jacob, says "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first born"—a custom which governs the marriage of two sisters in India (Genesis, xxix. 26.) See para. 3 above.

Manu, *Institutes*, III. 15.

Musahar (Re 1¼),[1] Ahir, Chamar, Dhangar, Habura (each Rs 2), Bhar (Rs 2½), Patari (Rs. 3), Byar (Rs 4), Bansphor (Rs 4¼), Bhuiya, Chero, Dom, Dusadh, Kharwar, Kol, Korwa, Majhwar, Panka, Parahiya (each Rs 5), Khatik (Rs 7), Bhuiyar, Dharkar, Sahariya (each Rs 8), Tharu (Rs 9), Agariya (Rs 10), Ghasiya (Rs 12), Bhajgi (Rs 40 to 50), Bhil (Rs 30 to 60), Nat (Rs 25), Khapariya (Rs 100), Sansiya (Rs 500); with Soiri, Raji, Kingariya,[2] Kalwar, Jat and Gond

The Aheriya, Audhiya, Baiswar, Basor, Bhat, Bhatiya, Bind, Dangi, Golapurab, Gujar, Jat, Kachhi, Kayatha, Khangar, Kurmi, Lodha, Pasi, Sadh, Sejwari, and Sonar, with most Brahman and Rajput clans, have the custom of a bridegroom price or dowry

Some castes, either instead of or in addition to the above forms of payment, have a sort of fee to clinch the betrothal, usually paid by the bridegroom's father It is usually a rupee or two, and among some liquor-drinking castes is often ceremonially transferred as follows Each party has a measure of liquor in a leaf cup the bridegroom's father drops the fee money into his The cups are then interchanged five times, which leaves the money with the bride's father, the liquor is then drunk off Such castes are the Baheliya, Bari, Basor, Bhar, Dhangar, Dharkar, Kalwar and Kanjar The custom is known as *barachha* or *barrekhi*

16 Irregular unions

A race, such as the Hindu, which puts a very high value on marriage, will not easily condone breaches of the laws that govern it And, indeed, all Hindus of decent social position prize the chastity of their women, and punish severely incontinence in either sex Nevertheless, the customary restrictions on marriage are so far-reaching and so rigid, that irregular unions must often be the only unions possible And it is not surprising, therefore, to find that amongst the more primitive castes, such unions are not

[1] The odd four annas is *siwai*, for luck

[2] The Kingariya (a Muhammadan caste) exchanges presents, the Jat sometimes pays a bride price, sometimes a dowry

uncommon especially as such castes are often numerically the weakest There is at all events an intelligible excuse for their existence even if the strait laced critic may not regard it as an adequate reason

17 Recognized concubinage

Any magistrate who has had occasion to enquire into the exact status of an alleged wife knows that the term wife (*aurat mehraru* etc) is by no means definite It covers not only the woman who has been married by the full legal form (*byah*) but one who as a widow has been married by a maimed rite (*dharewa, karao sagai*) and also a concubine (*bithlai rakhi*) As a rule, castes which permit only virgin marriage recognize no legal rite save *byah* castes which permit widows to remarry recog nize the maimed rite as adequate in the case of such remarriage whilst some castes permit concubinage as well which is so far legal that the children are admitted to caste rights and sometimes also to a restricted right of inheritance In most cases such concubinage must be with a woman of the caste but there are exceptions The Chamar Bhangi and a few other similar castes per mit concubinage with a woman of higher caste—a curious form of snobbery The Beriya permits concubinage in any shape Unrecognized concubinage is punished by excommunication frequently the payment of a fine and the provision of a feast to the brotherhood is necessary to win recognition even of such concubinage as is per mitted

18 Pre-marital immorality

Some very low castes, such as the Agariya Baheliya Barai Barwar Bhuiyar Byar and Dhangar are willing to condone immorality between two members of the same caste on payment of a fine and provision of a feast to the brotherhood so long as the guilty pair subse quently marry Similar behaviour with an outsider is for bidden by all castes save those who devote their girls to a life of immorality or such castes as the Bansphor and Basor who condone it if the outsider is of a higher caste The Ghasiyas still follow a very old custom by which a

[1] e g amongst Agariyas, Baris Barwars and Byars.

council Adultery is punishable under the criminal law, and cases in which it is the point at issue are not infrequent

21 Forms of marriage ceremony

The *byah* can be carried out in one of two forms, both in common use called *charhawa* and *dola* The great and only important difference between them is that the former is carried out at the house of the bride and the latter at the house of the bridegroom The rites vary considerably from caste to caste, and it is unnecessary to give details which are always to be found for any caste in Mr Crooke s pages The most important parts of the ceremony are usually

(i) the *kanyadan* (giving away of the bride by her father)

(ii) the *pheri bhaunwar* (circumambulation of the marriage-shed, or of a pole in its midst) which is carried out five or seven times by the pair together with their clothes knotted

(iii) the *sendurdan* or marking of the parting of the bride s hair with red lead by the bridegroom

Other interesting ceremonies are

(iv) the *rasbarag* a comparison of the horoscopes of bridegroom and bride

(v) the *tilak* a ceremonial offering of the dowry to the bridegroom

(vi) the *matmangara* or collection of lucky earth by the priest to be placed in the *manro* or wedding shed

(vii) the *kohabar* rites—the *kohabar* is a retiring room whither the pair are conducted after the ceremony

(viii) the *khichari* or *dudhabati* a sort of *confarreatio* in which the bridal pair eat milk and rice together and in the presence of their relatives

[1] It is perhaps not too strong a statement that there is always something dubious about such cases. If the case be true, the council of the caste will generally have satisfied the husband s vengeance to the full. Certainly it is always important to discover what the council has done in the matter and if it has done nothing then the reason of its inaction. It is also important to demand proof of *byah* or other legal marriage. Very often the co-respondent (accused) has run away with the *aurat* of the complainant, but the *aurat* is only a concubine so that there is no criminal offence

(ix) the *pair-puja*, or washing of the bridegroom's feet by the bride's father.

Of these rites, the first is probably universal: the last four are all low caste rites.

The maimed rite known as *dharewa, sagai,* or *karao* is always of a simple nature, but varies considerably. Rubbing red lead on the parting of a woman's hair, and putting oil on her head, the gift of a present to the bride by the bridegroom, sometimes accompanied by the bride's declaration in the caste council of her willingness to accept him: the recitation of a *katha*, and the knotting together of the clothes of the pair,—are some of the forms of this rite. There is also, of course, a tribal feast. It is obvious that, in this type of marriage ceremony, so long as something is done to publish the marriage, it matters very little what that something actually is.

22. *The age of marriage.*

There have been many theories to account for the custom of infant marriage. It has no Vedic authority whatever: the lawbooks enjoin it, but the ages approved by them are not so low as they have since become, and there is some evidence that the custom had opponents. It is by no means clear when it came into force: popular belief assigns it to the time of the early Muhammadan invaders.

The principal theories of the origin of this custom are five in number.

(i) The lawgivers state that the early marriage is necessary to purge the girl of original sin, and to save her father's soul by the birth of a son to carry on the domestic worship. But why should the desirability of the birth of a son compel a girl to be married several years before there is any chance of her being able to bear one? The account is obviously *ex post facto*—as the accounts of the ancient lawgivers often are.

(ii) A theory that the custom was designed to save the girl from her own desires at a time when on one hand, the position of woman was lowered, and on the other, the paternal power had increased. Facts are against this theory. When the lawgivers first enjoined the desirability

of infant marriage the position of women had not been lowered And it is surely ridiculous to suppose that fathers though armed with increased authority were unable to control their daughters without proceeding to such lengths as this

(iii) A theory that refers the custom to the influence of hypergamy Hypergamy by limiting the number of available husbands, makes it desirable to secure a bride groom as soon as possible Again facts contradict the theory In the time of the lawgivers hypergamy did not exist mixed marriages were not infrequent and conse quently there was an ample supply of potential husbands

(iv) Mr Nesfield s theory is that infant marriage was a means devised to save girls from intra tribal commun ism and marriage by capture At the period of the law books however Aryan society had long passed out of that stage of civilization where such customs were possible

(v) Finally there is the theory that by infant marri age Hindu parents hoped to preserve their girls from Muhammadan abductors This is simply Mr Nesfield s theory post-dated but the lawgivers date was long anterior to that of Muhammad let alone to that of the earliest Muhammadan invasions of India

The above account shows that theorists agree in re ferring the custom to an Aryan source and consequently regard it as characteristic rather of high than of low castes And when they find the custom in a low caste, they explain it as the result of imitating the customs of superior castes during the process of Hinduization

No authority has ever admitted that the Dravidian element in Hindu society might have developed such a custom independently Arguing from probabilities in the absence of evidence all writers have held it to be incon ceivable that such an institution should arise in the struggle for existence out of which society has been evolved The savage woos in a summary and not over delicate fashion a sturdy young woman who can make herself generally useful But as a result of fresh en

Cf *Census Report India* 1901 para. 710 et seq for a fuller account of these theories.

quiries, we now know that infant marriage exists among savages in all quarters of the globe[1] This fact disposes of the picture of the savage wooing his bride with a battle-axe, and (like the wicked sailor in *Robinson Crusoe*) indifferent to her looks provided she is useful Since savage races elsewhere have developed this custom independently of contact with a higher race, it becomes possible that our low castes have similarly developed it and it is now necessary to examine cases of infant marriage in low castes

Unfortunately, it is impossible to obtain clear evidence in the United Provinces, for there are no castes which are still entirely free of Hindu influences Infant marriage, though a common, is not an invariable custom amongst savages, and we cannot ignore entirely the chance that a low caste may have acquired it in the process of Hinduization, indeed a low caste, formerly addicted to adult marriage, probably would adopt infant marriage as a part of that process It is worth noting, however, that the practice is extremely common amongst low castes, and also commoner in the east of the Provinces, where the low castes and the lower branches of widespread castes principally reside, than in the west

The marriage age of various low castes is given in the table below Where it is not stated, the boy's age is greater by a year or two than the girl's When two sets of figures are given, the second is that reported in 1911, the first that given by Mr Crooke (1895) It will be noticed that the second is invariably lower than the first, a change which can only be attributed to the process of Hinduization

Caste	*Girls*	*Boys*
Agariya	5-10	—
Aheriya	7-10, 5-9	5-12
Ahir	7-12	10-16

[1] Hartland, *Primitive Paternity* Curiously enough this writer, being apparently ignorant of the prevalence of the custom amongst low castes, regards Indian infant marriage as exceptional because it is practised by a civilized race

Caste	*Girls*	*Boys*
Baheliya	7-8	—
Baiswar	10-12	14
Bajgi	infant	adult
Balahar	8-9	10-11
Banjara	7 15	—
Bansphor	infant	12 13
Barai	8-9	9-12
Bargahi	adult 7 11	9-12
Barhai	9	14 15
Bari	12 13 10	12 10-12
Barwar	infant	adult
Basor	10-12	—
Bhangi	7-9	10-11
Bhar	5 12	—
Bharbhunja	7-9	—
Bhuiya	12	—
Bhuiyar	10-12	—
Bind	10-12	—
Byar	6-12	—
Chai	10-12	—
Chamar	3-8	—
Chero	5-10	—
Chhipi	infant	—
Chunhar	5 10	—
Dangi	7-8	12 13
Dhangar	10-12	—
Dhanuk	7 11	—
Dharkar	adult	adult
Dhobi	12	14
Dom (Hills)	8-10	—
Dom (Plains)	11 12	—
Dusadh	adult	adult
Gadariya	7 12	—
Ghasiya	adult	adult
Gond	adult	adult
Goriya	under 14	5-10
Gujar	9-16	—
Habura	adult	adult
Halwai	9-10 5-12	10-14

Caste	*Girls*	*Boys*
Kachhi	9	10
Kahar	8-12	8-15
Kalwar	infant	infant
Kanjar	7-8, 6-8	10-12, 9-10
Kapariya	7-8	—
Kasera	under 12	—
Kewat	5-7	5-10
Khagi	8-10	12-13
Khairwa	7-15	—
Kharwar	5-10	—
Khatik	8-10, 3-15	3-15
Koiri	under 12	—
Korwa	10	12
Kumhar	9-10	10-15
Lodha	5-10	6-12
Lohar	5-14	—
Luniya	10-12	—
Majhwar	12	16
Mali	7-10	10-15
Mallah	9-10	10-12
Nai	under 10	—
Nat	10-12	15
Pasi	5-16	—
Phansiya	7-12	—
Sahariya	0-10	—
Sejwari	9	10
Teli	infant	infant
Tharu	adult	adult

These figures show that adult marriage is rare and infant marriage common amongst low castes, whilst there is a tendency to lower the age of marriage, consequent on the rise of low castes in the social scale, which is only partially counteracted by the efforts of reformers to raise that age

Other circumstances, however, affect the question The time when a man will marry his child depends in part on the amount of money he can spare for the pur-

pose A good crop means a lengthy marriage season[1] In the fat years 1909-1911 there was a large increase of married persons under five years of age

23 Terms of relationship

The vernacular of the United Provinces is remarkably rich in its terms of relationship there is always one word and sometimes more for fifty or sixty different kinds of relative Yet the Indian, in speaking of his relatives and still more in speaking to them manages to get along with very few a fact which causes at times no little confusion *Bhai* (brother) includes not only a full (*saga*) brother but a half brother every kind of cousin approximately equidistant with the speaker from a common ancestor a fellow casteman or even a fellow villager It is common perhaps more common than not to address certain relatives by terms denoting different relationships A wife is often called *bahu* (son s wife) both by her husband and her children sometimes she is called *bhauji* (brother s wife) again by all her family Both daughters- and sons-in law call their father in law *abba* (father) or *chacha* (uncle) A father is often addressed as *chacha* (father s brother) or *bhaiya* (brother) or *dada* (grandfather) by his sons, an uncle calls his nephews *beta* (son) or *pota* (grandson) This confusing practice has its parallel in English family life when one relative imitates another in the name he gives to a third A man for instance calls his wife s father by the name father because his wife does He will speak of a cousin without describing him as first or second or once removed just as an Indian speaks of a *bhai* without explaining the kind of *bhai* that he means and the reason is that both cousin and *bhai* are enough of a description for ordinary purposes The custom is, however produced to extreme lengths in Indian family life younger members of a family call their elder relatives by the same terms as other elder relatives do and as under the joint family system there are many more such elders

[1] Hindu marriages can only take place d ring a certain period or periods of the year which are fixed by the astrologers. The marriage season is called *lagan*.

living together than there are in an English home, the result is most confusing The wife, for instance, lives with her husband's parents in her early married life They speak of and to her as *bahu*, as a consequence so do her husband and children Where the husband has no parents but has sisters, they call the wife *bhauji*, and therefore her husband and children also address her by the same term On the other hand, she calls her husband's father *abba* or *chacha* because her husband does, and he calls her mother *bhauji* because she does, having learnt it from her paternal aunt The process obviously can be carried on almost indefinitely, but the most striking cases of using the name of one relation for another are

(i) Amongst Hindus, father and mother are called paternal uncle and aunt

(ii) Amongst both Hindus and Muhammadans, the father's brother and his wife are called father and mother

(iii) Amongst Muhammadans, the father's sister and mother's brother's wife, amongst Hindus the latter, are called mother

(iv) Amongst both Hindus and Muhammadans, cousins, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are called brother or sister

(v) Amongst both Hindus and Muhammadans, nephews are called sons

(vi) Amongst Muhammadans, parents-in-law are called indifferently by the terms for most kinds of uncle and aunt

In the first and second cases, and their correlatives, the fourth and the fifth, the cause amongst Hindus is probably the joint family system Brothers and their progeny live in the same house, and it is not strange that the terms for uncle and father, son and nephew, become interchangeable, and that cousins regard each other as brothers The sixth case is referable to cousin marriage, which is common amongst Muhammadans, so that the parents-in-law are as a matter of fact frequently uncles and aunts [1]

[1] For a list of terms of relationship see *Census Report, U P*, 1911, pp 236 *et sqq*

24. *The taboo on the use of the names of husband and wife*

A husband seldom calls his wife by her name a wife never calls her husband by his This custom is usually explained as due to respect but why should respect take this particular form? Most probably the custom is one instance of the general taboo on the use of names, which is common in many races The name is supposed to be closely connected with the personality and it is advisable to keep it secret for should an enemy chance to learn it he will acquire control over its owner's personality For this reason Hindus have two names, one secret one for use and frequently give a child some opprobious nickname such as Ghasita Tinkauriya or Bhikhu It is said that the officiating priest causes the bride to pronounce her future husband's name at the wedding by introducing it into the formulas which she has to repeat As the name is so often that of a god his inventive faculty is not greatly strained The usual circumlocution adopted is father or mother of so and so or a general term of respect and affection

Principal authorities.—Frazer *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910).
Hartland, *Primitive Paternity* (1909).
Crooke *Tribes and Castes of the N W P and Oudh* (1896).
Census Report U.P 1911

The commandment, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain is due to the same idea. To take His name in vain (unnecessarily or heedlessly), is to insult His personality Another explanation refers the taboo to marriage by capture.

APPENDIX I TO CHAPTER IV

The Origin of the Levirate

McLennan[1] refers the origin of the levirate to a system of fraternal polyandry In such a system, a wife is the joint property of a group of brothers when one of them dies, her position is not affected, for she remains the property of the rest Her children, by whatever brother, are affiliated to the eldest of them in his lifetime and the affiliations to the deceased husband which are characteristic of the Jewish and Aryan levirates are a mere extension of this practice Finally, if in such a system a younger brother were to acquire a wife of his own, he would leave the joint establishment altogether,[2] and his elder brother would have no more claim to his wife at his death than to the wife of any other stranger which explains why an elder brother may not marry a younger brother's widow

Sir James Frazer[3] refers the custom to a system of group marriage under which all the men of a group, who are usually brothers, share all the wives of that group And there are other explanations, which need not be given[4]

The custom is widespread it is found in all ages of the world's history, in all parts of the globe, and in all sorts of marriage systems No single explanation will suffice to cover all the instances of it and indeed it takes different forms in different circumstances But the fundamental idea which underlies the custom appears to be the conception of the wife as property, and therefore as heritable It may be objected that the natural heir to a man's pro-

[1] J F McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (1886)
[2] As actually happens in Jaunsar-Bawar
[3] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910)
[4] Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh* (1896), Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage* (1901), *Ency Brit* (11th edition),—article on 'Levirate', Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*

perty is his son, whilst the heir in this particular case is the brother But firstly, even in respect of other kinds of property the son does not always inherit for instance, though a minor might get the chief s estate he might not by reason of his minority get the chieftainship, which would then pass to some older relative And secondly inheritance of women means marriage and there is no race however low that would permit the union of mother and son the natural heir in such a case *would* be the brother

This theory does not explain the prohibition on the Succession of the elder brother to the younger brother s widow But firstly this prohibition is not universal in many African tribes the elder brother does so succeed Secondly there is a widespread taboo on intercourse of any kind whatever between the elder brother and his younger brother s wife [1] which taboo is due to quite other reasons but where it exists as it does in India then *a fortiori* there can be no marriage between them And lastly the elder brother would normally predecease his younger brother and normally therefore would not be available to marry the latter s widow and in primitive races the normal is apt to become the legal

The Aryan form of the levirate (*niyoga*) is definitely based on the idea of the wife as property The husband who authorizes it after his death could also have authorized it during his life and the sons born in *niyoga* are affiliated to him because they like their mother, are his property

The evidence regarding the Jewish custom is less conclusive chiefly because the various references to it relate to various stages in its development and its original form cannot be determined But the story of Ruth points the same way Boaz was not a levir whose duty it would have been to marry Ruth and raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance He was merely a near kins-

Frazer *Totemism and Exogamy*—references under Avoidance
Ruth iv 5 10; Deut. xxv 6.

man', or *goel*,[1] who had under the Jewish law the right to purchase *for himself* the land of Elimelech and his sons[2] But in that capacity he chose also to 'purchase Ruth to be his wife'[3] and having done so, to play the part of a levir and so raise up an heir to that land For our purpose, the important point is that Ruth was purchased with the land, and was accordingly regarded as property

Finally, the low caste custom of the present day also depends on the same idea A levir would not pay for the widow, since he inherits her but if any other person would marry her, he must buy her of her late husband's family, whose property she is

[1] Ruth iii 9, 12, and elsewhere the Hebrew word is *goel* throughout Cf Lev xxv 25
[2] Ruth iv 3
[3] Ruth iv 10

APPENDIX II TO CHAPTER IV

Proverbs on Marriage

1 Universality of marriage

Jaiki joru taiko ghar	Who has a wife has a home
Begharni ghar, bhut ka dera	A wifeless house is the devil's abode
Jiski joru andar, uska nasib Sikandar	A man with a wife at home, is as lucky as Alexander (the Great)
Na mili nari, to sada brahmchari	A wifeless man takes to religion

2 Endogamy

Pani launo mul so dhik, Byah karno kul so dhik	Look to the spring ere you draw of its water Look to the race ere you marry its daughter
	Give gifts within your *gotra*, save the gift of a daughter (Sanskrit)

3 Widow marriage

Pheron ki gunagar	Her marriage her sin (of a child-widow)
Burhi ghori, lal lagam	An old mare with a red bridle (referring to the red lead mark of a married woman)
Falane ki man khasam kiya bahut bura kiya Karke chhor diya aur bhi bura kiya	A mother took a husband that was bad She left him that was worse

4 Levirate

Gharib ki bah ab ki bhawaj	The poor man's wif is everybody's elder brother s widow
Dada leih ban ban leik sagali man.	His wife depends on the eldest brother the whole family depends on his wife.
Bhawaji k thalli dewa araf k rai.	The *dewa* becomes a banker through the wealth of his elder brother s widow

5 Polygamy

Ek byahwal kakravarti; Dwi byahwala ki kakurgati Tin byahwal ki bara bhag Dwi lijawan dandi k lijao ag	A man with one wife lives the life of a king; A man with two wives is a poor wretched thing (literally has dog l ck); A man with three wives has a fate that is dire Two wives bear his coffin the third lights his pyre. (*Bara bh g,* literally great luck is sarcastic.)
Saut wa maut.	A second wife means death.

6. Polyandry

Do khasam ki joru chausar ki got	The wife of two husbands is like draught at backgammon.
Ek joru sarke kunb ko bas hai	One wife is enough for a whole family

7 Matriarchate

Nana k t k khawe dada k pot kahlawe	He eats his mother s father s bread, but is called the grandson of his father s father
Sawa men k rel phula nand dekh nawasa bhala	The *k rela* flower blossoms in August; the daughter son sees (the wealth of) his mother mother and swells (with pride).
Sat mama k bhanja bhuka ki bhuka phire	The nephew of seven maternal ncles goes hungry (i.e. too many cooks poil the broth).
M m ph pha k bha kaka baron ka dal	Sons of mother's brother and f ther s sister are brothers; sons of f ther s elder and younger brothers are enemies.

8 Cousin marriage

J mama beti ahin dega t kaun d ga?	If my mother brother does not give me his daughter (i mar riage), then who will give me hi daughter?

CHAPTER V

COMMENSAL AND OTHER SIMILAR RESTRICTIONS OF CASTE

1 The idea of taboo

The daily life of a Hindu, from the cradle to the grave, is regulated by a code of ritual. His every act, every set of circumstances in which he may find himself, has its proper observances, which are minutely laid down The rites at birth, marriage and death, the fashion in matters of food, dress and ornament, the course of polite conversation, the etiquette connected with the use of the chair and the greeting of the guest—'rising and sitting' (*uthna baithna*), as the Hindu calls it—all are most carefully defined, and as carefully taught to the children of every respectable family

Many of these observances, according to Mr. Crooke,[1] are connected with the idea of 'taboo' Taboo depends on the conception that in every personality there is inherent a power, or rather a potentiality, for evil, which is to be dreaded and avoided The person in a state of taboo, and those with whom he comes in contact at such a time, are mutually dangerous to each other, as a precautionary measure he must, therefore, be carefully isolated This potentiality for evil is specially active at the crises of life, the mother and her child in childbirth, the bride and bridegroom at marriage, the dying man, the corpse, are all dangerous, and also specially susceptible to the evil potentiality in others It is the idea of taboo which explains many of the obscure rites connected with birth, marriage and death, it is also one of the causes of the strength of the caste system Since every stranger is a possible enemy, a man must needs take special pains to know who are his friends, and therefore

[1] *Natives of Northern India*, pp 194-5

must belong to a circle of persons whose interests are be yond question identical with his From this point of view the caste is a group of men united by bonds of com mon blood or common interests in self-defence against the dangers of the outer world

1 *Food taboos*

Food of course is specially liable to infection of this kind If the mere fall of the shadow of an evilly-disposed person is dangerous, a man must be very careful who cooks his food what food he eats and in what vessels he cooks it The food taboos of Hindu life complicate it to an almost in credible degree and as has many a time been pointed out prevent the growth of the good fellowship which we are wont to cement at the dinner table

Hindu food taboos are of several kinds

(i) The commensal taboo—which lays down the persons in whose company a man may eat food

(ii) The cooking taboo—which lays down the per sons who may cook the food that a man eats

(iii) The food taboo—which lays down what kinds of food a man may eat

(iv) The eating taboo—which lays down the proper ritual at a meal

(v) The drinking taboo—which lays down the per sons from whom a man may take water

(vi) The smoking taboo—which lays down the per sons whose pipe a man may smoke and in whose com pany he may smoke

(vii) The vessels taboo—which lays down the nature of the vessels that a man may use for eating drinking and cooking[1]

[1] Earlier writers, when referri g t these taboos, generally use language that is vague or even misleading Sir R Burn i the *Provincial Census R port* of 901 for instance uses some variant of the phrase—so and so may tak food from so and so. And M Crooke usually writes—so and so may eat the food of so and so. The phrases might refer either to the commensal or cooking taboo. I fact, the reference is always to the latter but the phrase is then misleading because it does not bri g out the main poi t—that it is the caste f the cook that matters, not the caste of the host I may mention that when referring to these taboos as whole I have usually called them commensal and food restrictions.

Members of the same exogamous group can, of course, eat together, for they are relatives by blood Members of different exogamous

3 (i) *The commensal taboo*

groups can also eat together if their groups can intermarry the commensal and connubial restrictions are co-terminous Indeed, the connexion between the two is so close as to show that it is causal, that originally two such groups could not eat together until intermarriage had actually occurred between them. At the present day the fact is obscured, for all groups that can intermarry have long since done so, but it is none the less certain. On the other hand, if two exogamous groups cease to intermarry and become endogamous in respect of each other, then they also cease to eat together In other words, the endogamous unit is also the commensal unit. A custom of hypergamy does not vary the rule all Rajput sects that intermarry eat together.

It is essential to realize that in respect of the cooking taboo, the criterion is the caste of the per-

4 (ii) *The cooking taboo*

son who cooks the food, not the caste of the person who offers it It follows, therefore, that a high caste Hindu can eat the food of a man of any caste, however low, if his host possesses a cook of suitable caste. And that is why so many cooks are Brahmans The Hindu draws a distinction between *kachcha* food, which is cooked in water, and *pakka* food, which is cooked with *ghi* (clarified butter) This distinction depends on the principle that *ghi*, like all the products of the sacred cow, protects from impurity. and since such protection is the object of all food taboos, this convenient fiction enables the Hindu to be less particular in the case of *pakka* than of *kachcha* food, and to relax his restrictions accordingly

I have examined the rules of some seventy-six castes or endogamous groups, they can be summarized thus —

Every Hindu can eat *kachcha* food that has been prepared by a member of his own endoga-

5 (a) *Kachcha food*

mous group or his *guru* (spiritual guide, who for this purpose ranks as a relative)

Thirty six castes confine themselves to this general rule and forbid their members to eat food cooked by anybody else Sixteen other castes will eat food cooked by a Brahman to which class we may add another two castes the Khattri and Saraswat Brahman who for a traditional reason will eat each other s *kachcha* food Four castes will also eat food cooked by Rajputs The remaining eighteen castes are less particular and will eat food cooked by others than the two castes men tioned But it is impossible to classify them accurately for each caste has its own list of possible cooks It can, however be said that every caste s list consists of castes of a higher social rank than its own or of castes equal to itself in rank Out of the eighteen five very low castes will take food from almost anybody

6. (b) Pakk food

Every caste save the Kanaujiya Brahman, may eat *pakka* food cooked by a member of the same caste (*not* in this case, endogamous group) a *guru* a Halwai confectioner or a Kahar domestic servant The Kanaujiya will not eat food cooked by a Kahar a Sarwariya will not eat food cooked by a Halwai Ten castes confine them selves to the general rule The Saraswat Brahman will also eat a Khattri s *pakka* food Thirteen castes will eat such food if cooked by a Brahman five will also eat it if cooked by a Rajput Next comes a class of some forty five cases, each of which will eat the *pakka* food of various castes of lower rank than Brahman or Rajput but of rank higher than or equal to its own and of this class, eight castes will eat the food of almost anybody

7. Classification based on the cooki g taboo

The seventy six castes whose rules we are investigating can now be classified as follows

(*a*) *Kachcha* food In respect[1] of *kachcha* food there are five main groups

(i) Those who will eat food cooked by a member of the endogamous group and *guru* only

[1] I ignore the peculiarities of the Khattri and Saraswat Brahmans in respect of *k ch ka* food, and of the Kana jiya and Saraswat Brahmans in respect of *pakka* food.

(ii) Those who will eat food cooked by the above, and also by Brahmans

(iii) Those who will eat food cooked by the above, and also by Rajputs

(iv) Those who will eat food cooked by the above, and also by lower castes of rank at least equal to their own

(v) Those who will eat food cooked by almost anybody

(b) *Pakka* food In respect of *pakka* food, there are also five groups The first consists of castes who will eat food cooked by a caste fellow, *guru*, Halwai or Kahar the other four correspond to the last four groups under *kachcha* food

The following table shows the group in which each of the seventy-six castes falls —

Caste	*Group*	
	kachcha	*pakka*
Agariya	3	1
Agarwala	2	4
Agrahri	1	1
Aheriya	4	4
Ahir	2	4
Bajgi	5	5
Balahar	4	4
Balai	4	4
Banjara	2	2
Barai	1	4
Barhai	2	4
Bari	4	4
Basor	4	4
Bhangi	5	5
Bhar	2	4
Bharbhunja	1	4
Bhuiya	4	5
Bind	1	1
Brahman (other)	1	4
Brahman Kanaujiya	1	1
Brahman Saraswat	1	1
Brahman Sarwariya	1	1
Byar	2	2
Chamar	5	5

Caste	*Group* *kachcha*	*pakka*
Chai	1	1
Chero	1	2
Chhipi	2	4
Dangi	2	2
Dharkar	1	5
Dom	5	5
Dusadh	4	4
Gandharb	2	4
Gharuk	1	4
Golapurab	2	4
Gujar	4	4
Gurchha	1	1
Halwai	1	4
Jat	4	4
Kachhi	1	1
Kahar	4	3
Kalwar	1	3
Kandu	2	4
Kanjar	5	5
Kapariya	3	3
Kasarwani	1	2
Kasaundhan	1	2
Kasera	1	4
Kathiyara	2	2
Kayastha	2	2
Kewat	1	4
Khairwa	1	1
Khandelwal	2	4
Khangar	4	5
Kharwar	1	2
Khatik	4	4
Khattri	1	2
Kisan	1	1
Koiri	1	1
Kori	3	4
Kumhar	1	1
Kurmi	1	4
Lodha	2	4
Lohar	1	4
Majhwar	1	2
Mali	4	4

Caste	*Group*	
	kachcha	*pakka*
Mallah	1	2
Nai	1	4
Panka	1	2
Pasi	2	4
Rahwari	1	4
Rajput	1	4
Ramaiya	1	4
Ror	1	4
Sejwari	3	3
Sonar	1	3
Tarkihar	1	4

With the assistance of this list we can group the castes according to the severity of their taboos as follows

Group 1. Agrahri, Brahman Kanaujiya, Brahman Sarwariya, Brahman Saraswat, Chai, Gurchha, Kachhi, Khairwa, Kisan, Koiri, Kumhar

Group 2 Chero, Kasarwani, Kasaundhan, Kharwar, Khattri, Majhwar, Mallah, Panka

Group 3 Agariya, Banjara, Byar, Dangi, Kalwar, Kathiyara, Kayastha, Sonar

Group 4 Barai, Bharbhunja, Brahman (other), Gharuk, Halwai, Kasera, Kewat, Kurmi, Lohar, Nai, Rahwari, Rajput, Ramaiya, Ror, Tarkihar

Group 5 Agarwala, Ahir, Barhai, Bhar, Chhipi, Dharkar, Gandharb, Golapurab, Kandu, Khandelwal, Kapariya, Lodha, Pasi, Sejwari

Group 6 Kahar, Kori

Group 7 Aheriya, Balahar, Balai, Bari, Basor, Dusadh, Gujar, Jat, Khatik, Mali

Group 8 Khangar

Group 9 Bajgi, Bhangi, Chamar, Dom, Kanjar

This list shows clearly that there is no relation between a caste's social position and the severity of its cooking taboo For instance, in Group 1, there are three castes that are positively low in Group 2, there are five in Group 3, there are three On the other hand, in Group 4 there are the two highest castes and five others of good

position, whilst there are three castes of good position as low as Group 7 The severe restrictions of low castes are possibly the result of Hinduization in most cases the parvenu always goes to extreme lengths in such matters Or they may be due to the fact that such low castes still hold relatively primitive beliefs, and that the taboo idea underlying these restrictions is more vivid to them than to higher castes, who of course now regard the latter as of a purely social nature The Jat and Gujar in this as in other respects are a law unto themselves, as is natural in a tribal caste Rajputs are much less particular than most Vaisyas possibly they consider that their position puts them above criticism This is also the probable explanation of the relatively low place of Brahmans The receipt of food from all and sundry on religious or quasi religious occasions (such as the expiation of a caste offence) is of course an incident of the Brahman s profession but that does not affect the question For if the donor of such food is of too low a caste for the Brahman to eat his food and he does not possess a cook of the required status, the difficulty is solved by a gift of uncooked food which the recipients cook themselves and eat at (or near) the house of the donor

It should be mentioned that the restrictions of many castes vary in different places the variations are too complicated to analyse but apparently depend on the esteem in which the caste is locally held

8 (iii) *The food taboos*

The usual meal of all classes of Hindus consists of rice or pulse, either boiled or cooked with ghi vegetables sweet cakes, and *chuppatis*[1] a kind of griddle cake made of various kinds of flour This is a purely vegetarian meal and in fact Hindus eat relatively little meat. Many can seldom afford it Of those that can afford it many avoid it because they pride themselves on their ceremonial purity or because their religion forbids it In practice most Brahmans, many Rajputs, and many of the higher Vaisya groups are vegetarians and so are all Vaish

[1] *Chuppatis* are always *kachcha* food, cakes are always *pakka* food The rest vary according to the manner of cooking.

navas and Jains in every caste But Saivas and Saktas[1] eat meat, with many others, even in these high castes For there is no social prohibition against its use, which was common in the Vedic and epic periods, though condemned in the *Mahabharata*

I have examined the food regulations of some sixty-six castes they can be summarized as follows

(i) Mutton, goat's flesh, venison and game birds are universally regarded as clean No caste that eats meat at all would refuse these

(ii) Many castes also eat fish

(iii) A few castes also eat fowls or wild boar's flesh, or substitute them for fish

(iv) Many castes will eat the flesh of any cloven-footed animal (except beef), with or without fish and fowls This means, in practice, that they will eat the flesh of the domestic pig and wild boar, as well as mutton, goat's flesh and venison

(v) Some low castes vary their diet with the flesh of animals that are not usually regarded as fit for food

(iv) A few castes will eat beef

9 The meat-food of various castes

Sixteen castes confine themselves to the clean food mentioned above These are the Arakh, Banjara, Barai, Bhar,[2] Bharbhunja, Bhot, Dusadh, Gharuk, Halwai, Kahar, Kayastha,[3] Luniya, Majhwar, Mali, Nai and Sonar According to Dr Buchanan, writing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Sarwariya Brahman would also fall in this class, for they then ate goat, deer, porcupine, hare, partridge, quail, pigeon, dove, and wild duck This was in Gorakhpur it is doubtful if they still have so varied a meat-diet.

Fifteen castes also eat scaled fish, namely the Barwar, Gandharb, Kamkar, Kandu, Kasera, Kathak, Khairwa, Kisan, Koiri, Kumhar, Kurmi, Lohar, Mallah, Saraswat Brahman and the Tamboli

[1] Vaishnava, Saiva, Sakta are Hindu sects, Jain a separate religion

[2] Except those who keep pigs

[3] Crooke says they do not eat venison but I have often given Kayastha clerks a joint of black buck

Two castes, the Baheliya and Balswar, eat fowls but not fish three castes the Kalwar, Kingariya and Teli eat both The Bundela Rajput eats wild boar s flesh the Jat and Gujar eat both that and fowls, but not fish

Four castes eat the flesh of any cloven footed animal save beef but will not eat fish or fowl These are the Balai Beriya Bhangi and Sahariya The Dhanuk adds fish to this diet, the Ghasiya adds fowls and seven castes eat all the animals mentioned namely the Bansphor Basor Byar Kharwar Kol Lodha,[1] and Panka

Four castes, the Beldár Bhuiya Bind and Pasi regard field rats as a delicacy

The Agariya Balahar Bajgi Chero and Sansiya will eat almost anything but beef

The Kewat will not eat beef pork or fowls, but in addition to the clean foods and fish eats tortoises and crocodiles

The Chamar Dhangar Dom and Korwa will eat beef the Dhangar in fact will eat anything except reptiles and the monkey whilst the Dom eats tiger s flesh and the Korwa bear and monkey

It will be noticed that with the exception of the Lodha (and he only in some places) no caste of even respectable status will eat the domestic pig, whilst only two such castes will eat fowls

Certain minor points may be mentioned Some castes have taboos peculiar to themselves the Agarwala for instance, will not eat the turnip carrot or onion the Dangi will not eat the onion and certain subcastes called Haldiya will not eat turmeric These, however are due to special superstitions In some castes such as the Byar Ghasiya and Kol pork is forbidden to women though the men eat it Nor are women allowed to drink intoxicating liquor as a rule but this is due chiefly to its cost How can a poor man afford to buy liquor for his women folk? was the plaintive answer of a Karwal who was questioned on the point

[1] In some places only

It is necessary to point out that a caste dietary like its cooking taboos, may vary in different parts of the province.

10. (c) The eating taboos.

A Hindu sits down to a meal either alone or with his caste fellows. The women cannot eat with the men; they wait till their lords have finished. So long as the meal or a part of it consists of *kachcha* food (as it usually does, since *chuppatis* appear at most meals), the man must dine with the precautions of a magic ceremony. He sits within a square marked off on the ground (*chauka*) inside which is the *chulha* or cooking place. Should a stranger's shadow fall upon this square, all cooked within it is polluted and must be thrown away.[1] In camp, Hindu servants may be seen, each well apart from the rest, each within his own *chauka*, cooking his food upon his own mud oven and eating alone; it is only the lowest castes who ever venture to neglect this very troublesome custom. In Moradabad are certain Chauhans, who claim to belong to the famous Rajput clan of that name, but are regarded as degraded, partly because they practice widow-marriage, partly because they eat *kachcha* food in the fields instead of in the decent privacy of their own homes and *chaukas*.

11. The Nagar Brahman.

Though the Nagar Brahman is not at home in the United Provinces, he will serve as an example of the lengths to which the ritual of eating can go. Before eating he must bathe and dress himself in clean garments; if these are of cotton, they too must first be washed, and dried in a place where nothing impure can touch them. Numerous accidents may occur to render him impure, and so compel him to desist from his meal. If he touches an earthen vessel that has contained water; if he touches a piece of cotton cloth, or of raw cotton that has been touched by a person who was not himself in a state of ceremonial purity, or else has not been dipped in oil or *ghi*; if he touches leather or bone or paper (unless in the last case there is Hindi writing on it); if he touches

[1] It is dubious how far in practice this superstition would go. The entrance of a stranger within the *chauka* would certainly pollute the food; but I doubt if any but high castes would object to his shadow.

or is touched by a donkey pig dog,[1] or a child that is old enough to eat solid food—then he is at once defiled Again contact with a Brahman who though pure is himself eating or has just eaten will make him impure if he has not actually begun to eat He may not read a printed book at his meal because printing ink is impure he may not read a manuscript book unless it is bound with silk and the binder has used a special paste of pounded tamarind seed In such circumstances, one begins to wonder that anybody thinks it worth while to eat at all

( ) The drinking taboo

Rules regarding the acceptance of water are on the whole the same as those regarding the acceptance of *pakka* food but with a tendency to greater laxity The vessel in which the water is contained affects the question A high caste man will allow a low caste man to fill his *lota* (drinking vessel) for him but he will not drink from the *lota* of that low caste man Or a high caste man will give anybody (save untouchables) a drink, by pouring water from his own *lota* into that of the drinker all the men employed at stations to supply railway travellers with water are Brahmans All castes will take water from Barhais Baris Bharbhunjas Halwais, Kahars and Nais and of course from higher castes still

3 (vi) The smoking taboo

Rules regarding smoking are stricter It is very seldom that a man will smoke with anybody but a caste fellow the reason no doubt is that smoking with a man usually involves smoking his pipe and this involves much closer contact even than eating food which he has prepared So stringent is this rule indeed that the fact that Jats, Ahirs, and Gujars will smoke together has been regarded as a ground for supposing that they are closely akin Some castes, the Kayastha for instance, differentiate between smoking in *narial* fashion—in which the hands are closed round the pipe and the smoke is drawn in without putting the stem actually in the mouth—and smoking in the usual way

[1] But not a cat for nothing will keep a cat away from food.

14 (vii) *The vessels taboo*

Little need be said on the subject of vessels[1] There are rules laying down what sort of vessels should be used, and of what metal they should be made, but they are rather religious than social. Hindus must use brass or alloy (although the use of alloy is hedged about by numerous and minute injunctions, and if such vessels become impure, the only remedy is to get them remoulded) The risk of pollution makes it imperative for every man to have a few vessels of his own The minimum consists of a *lota* (drinking vessel), *batua* (cooking pot), and *thali* (dish) Better class folk add a *katora* (saucer), *gilas* (glass), *kalchhal* (spoon), and *gagra* (water pot) For feasts, the brotherhood usually keep a set of large vessels of all kinds, which they lend to the host these are bought with the proceeds of fines, and are common property

15 *Pollution by touch*

Any person, who is himself in a state of ceremonial impurity, is capable of causing pollution by touch That is why a woman in her courses, a small-pox patient, the mother and child at child-birth, the relative who has set fire to the funeral pyre, are all carefully segregated for a certain period, for during that period they are impure, and consequently a danger to anybody with whom they may come in contact A certain number of low castes, however, are regarded as being permanently impure, and therefore permanently capable of causing pollution by touch Any Hindu who may come in direct contact with such an 'untouchable', himself becomes impure, and before eating food, or embarking on any undertaking which demands ceremonial purity, must bathe himself and wash his clothes This superstition has never been so strong in the United Provinces as in some other parts of India, where the shadow of an 'untouchable' can convey pollution, and the effective range of his impurity is laid down in an exact number of feet, which may be as many as

[1] For further information see G R Dampier, *Monograph on the Brass and Copper Industry of the U P* (1894)

sixty-four but it is of sufficient importance to require detailed description

In 1901 Sir Richard Burn after local enquiries in all districts drew up a scheme of social precedence, which included a list of untouchable castes [1] At first sight the list is incomprehensible it is impossible to guess why some castes should be included it is also impossible to understand on the assumption that the inclusion of some castes is correct, why others of similar occupations habits, and status should be omitted But as the result of enquiries that I have recently made, it has become possible to reduce apparent chaos to something like order The information thus collected may be summarized thus

(*a*) It is a mistake to suppose that all Hindus of respectable social position or even all twice born Hindus have the same standard of touchability The Brahman s standard has always been higher than that of others, and castes may be touchable to a Rajput or Vaisya that are untouchable to a Brahman

(*b*) The superstition is far less strong than it was when Sir Richard Burn wrote Fifteen years ago any Hindu of good caste that came in contact with an untouchable, would have taken steps to remove the pollution at the earliest possible moment Today few trouble about the matter at all except Brahmans and even they are relatively lax A Brahman working in the field with some untouchable labourer will be quite indifferent whether he touches him or not for the bath that he will take in any case on his return home, will remove any impurity that may have been caused by chance contact

(*c*) The castes whom the Brahman would regard as untouchable may be classified in groups as follows

(1) Those that have an unclean occupation, or are offshoots of such castes, whether their own occupation is unclean or not

[1] Groups XI and XII of his scheme: see *Census Report U.P* 1901 p. 252

For this information, I am indebted to a Brahman friend, a Government officer and landlord.

(2) Those that keep pigs, or eat pork or beef.

(3) Wandering tribes, if they have no settled home to which they return

(4) One caste, for unknown reasons

On the basis of these remarks, we may proceed to scrutinize Sir Richard Burn's list, and arrange the castes mentioned therein in the four groups mentioned above Many will fall in more groups than one and it will be necessary to insert castes that are not in the list, but on these criteria should be added to it.

First group Bahelıya, Bhangi, Chamar, Dabgar, Dhobi, Dom and Khatik and the following groups that are Dom offshoots —

Balahar, Bansphor, Basor, Dharkar and Domar, and the Kori, a Chamar offshoot

Second group Agariya, Aheriya, Bajgi, Balahar, Balai, Bansphor, Basor, Berija, Bhangi, Chamar, Dhangar, Dhanuk, Dharkar, Dhobi, Dom, Domar, Habura, Kanjar, Khatik, Korwa, Musahar, Nat, Pasi and Sahariya To these must be added the Beldar, Bhuiyar, Byar, Ghasiya, Kharwar, Kol, Panka, and Sansiya, with some Bhars, Binds, and Lodhas

Third group Bawariya, Bengali, Beriya, Habura, and Nat to which should be added Bhantu and Sansiya.

Fourth group Dusadh

On this arrangement the worst untouchables are the Bhangi, Chamar, Dhobi, Dom, Khatik, the Dom offshoots, the Beriya, Habura, Nat, and Sansiya, all of whom fall into two groups

There are two surprising entries in the list The first is the Dusadh, a village menial caste, but with an interesting history behind him his occupation and his food are both clean enough, and there seems no reason why he should be regarded as untouchable The other is the Baheliya, who is a hunter the cause suggested to me was his habit of snaring birds with bird lime, which is regarded as unpleasantly cruel.

16. *Pollution among lower castes*

Some castes that are themselves low are especially strict in keeping untouchables at a distance I have examined the taboos of twenty five such castes the principal results are given in the following table

Caste name	*Regard as untouchable the*				
	Bhangi	*Chamar*	*Dharkar*	*Dhobi*	*Dom*
Agariya					1
Audhiya	1	1			
Baheliya	1			1	1
Bajgi	1	1			1
Bansphor				1	1
Basor	1	1	1	1	1
Bhangi	x			1	1
Bhar	1		1	1	1
Bhot	1	1		1	
Bhuiya		1	1	1	1
Bhuiyar		1	1	1	1
Bind		1	1		1
Byar	1	1	1		1
Chamar		x		1	1
Dangi	1	1			
Dharkar		1	x	1	1
Dom				1	x
Dusadh		1	1		1
Gharuk	1	1			
Ghasiya				1	
Golapurab	1	1		1	
Khangar	1	1		1	
Kharwar		1	1		1
Khatik		1	1	1	1
Majhwar		1	1	1	1

Eleven castes will not touch a Bhangi seventeen will not touch a Chamar ten will not touch a Dharkar six teen wil not touch a Dhobi or a Dom These are the untouchables *par excellence* though one or more of the twenty five castes also regard the Basor Bhuiya, Gha siya Kori Musahar Pasi and Patari as untouchable The most particular in this respect are the Basor, Bhar Bhuiya Bhuiyar Byar Khatik and Majhwar most of

them, however, are not quite so low as the other castes in this list, whilst the Basor has all the intolerance of the parvenu This caste is a branch of the Dom tribe, that has settled down to relative respectability, and now will have nothing to do not only with the Dom and Dharkar,[1] its close relations, the Bhangi and Dhobi which not long ago were its equals, but extends its objection to the Musahar, which always was, and still is, a respectable though somewhat primitive caste

Of the five chief untouchables, the Dom is scarcely Hinduized at all, and the Dharkar but little more so, and the occupations of the Bhangi, Chamar and Dhobi put them outside the pale. The Bhangi is a scavenger, the Chamar deals in dead cattle, whilst the Dhobi handles dirty clothes and that ill-omened beast, the donkey

Principal authorities —Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh* (1896)
Census Report, U P, 1901 and 1911
Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*

[1] The Dharkar is also an offshoot of the Dom tribe

CHAPTER VI

THE SYSTEM OF CASTE GOVERNMENT

1 *Caste government*

In every caste there is some authority charged with the duty of compelling obedience to customary laws Among the twice-born — Brahmans Rajputs, and Vaisyas—that authority is often nothing more concrete than public opinion But most castes possess a regular system of government of which the ruling body is a council or assembly known as a *panchayat* The powers of this body vary both in nature and extent In all castes it has some measure of judicial power and investigates and punishes offences against custom in many it is also a licensing authority authorizing acts or omissions which by custom require such sanction

2 *The caste council*

It is possible to make certain general statements that are true of all *panchayats*

(*a*) The group which a *panchayat* rules is not the caste as such but the endogamous group whether it be caste or subcaste[1] Just as a man may eat food prepared by another if he can marry that other's daughter so too he may meet him in council And the *panchayat* of one endogamous group is completely independent of the *panchayats* of other similar groups within the same caste If two or more *panchayats* meet to consider matters of mutual interest they meet as independent and equal powers, which are not necessarily friends, let alone allies[2] The council of the caste as such is the *sabha* which is discussed in a later paragraph

[1] There are only two exceptions the Nai (see par 6), where the *panchayat* is a caste one; and the Rajput, where the unit is the exogamous group (see par 17).

[2] Occasionally *panchayats* of two groups in different castes meet in the same way *See Census Report U P.*, 1911 p. 333 note 1

(*b*) But decentralization goes further still There is not one *panchayat* only to each endogamous group, but one *panchayat* to each independent local section of that group In other words, the *panchayat* is not of the *zat*, but of the *biradari*[1] The local boundaries of the jurisdiction of each such *panchayat* are clearly demarcated sometimes it covers part of a village or town, sometimes a whole village or town, occasionally a group of villages These jurisdictions are called by various names—*ilaqa*, *juwar* (estate), *tat*, *chatai* (mat—from the tribal mat used at meetings of the brotherhood), *ghol* (circle or group), are some of the commonest The *panchayats* of the brotherhoods within the same endogamous group are independent of each other, but as a rule they respect each other's decrees whilst in some castes it is customary to hold regular conferences, at which several *panchayats* of the same endogamous group meet to discuss questions of mutual interest

(*c*) The word *panchayat* means 'quintette'—a group of five persons But it is safe to say that no *panchayat* ever consists of so small a number Generally, every adult male in a *biradari* has a right to speak and vote less frequently, the *panchayat* consists of representatives, selected on one basis or another, but always in greater numbers than five On the other hand, there is in most *panchayats* a committee which guides its deliberations—a sort of cabinet in this House of Commons—and this committee always consists of a small number of members, which number is, more often than not, five. And it is in the constitution of this committee that *panchayats* chiefly differ

3 The two principal types of panchayat

Though caste *panchayats* exhibit endless minor variations, it is possible to distinguish two main types The first or 'permanent' type is a *panchayat* which possesses one or more permanent officers, whose duty it is to bring offences to its notice, and who have power to convene it whenever necessary These officers are always members of that committee, mentioned

[1] See appendix to Chapter I

above which guides the *panchayat's* deliberations The second or impermanent *panchayat* is one that possesses no such officers, nor any committee save such as may be appointed for the duration of any particular session How important the difference is will appear from the discussion that follows

4 Castes with permanent panchayats

Castes with permanent *panchayats* fall into four classes (i) Those connected with a single well-defined occupation, traditional or acquired namely the Agariya Aheriya Ahir[1] Baghban, Baheliya Balahar Banjara Bansphor, Barai Barhai, Bari, Beldar Bhangi Chai Chamar Chhipi Daknut, Dhobi Dhuniya[2] Gadariya Gidhiya Halwai[2] Kalwar Kanmail Kayastha-Mochi Kewat Khapariya, Kori Kumhar Kutamali Lohar Luniya[1] Mali Mochi[1] Nai Phansiya Singhariya Sonar[1] Tamboli, Teli and Thathera with the Muhammadan castes Bhishti Churihar, Dafali Darzi Dhuniya Ghogar Ghosi Julaha Khumra Kunjra Manihar Mirasi Nanbai Niyariya Qalandar, Qassab, and Tawaif

(ii) Functional castes connected either with trade generally or with several allied occupations namely the Agrahri Kahar Kandu Kasarwani Khatik, Mahesri Oswal and Rauniyar

(iii) Non-functional castes of respectable position namely the Baiswar Bhoksa Bishnoi Gorchha, Goriya, Gujar Jat[1] Kachhi Khagi Khagi Chauhan Kirar Koiri Mina Murao Saini and Tharu

(iv) Non-functional castes of low position namely the Bhar Bhotiya Bhuiyar Bind Byar, Dangi Dhangar Dharkar, Dhimar Dom Dusadh Ghasiya, Kanjar Kharwar Kol Korwa Majhwar, Musahar Nat,[2] Parahiya and Pasi

This list consists of 104 castes Of these 66 are functional and 22 of low position which is sufficient to show that the permanent council is a characteristic of functional

[1] In some places only

[2] These castes have Muhammadan branches, which also possess permanent councils.

and low castes The most striking omissions are certain Vaisya trading castes such as the Agarwala and Umar the most curious inclusion is the Bishnoi, a sectarian caste

5 *The permanent element in the council*

In most brotherhoods, there is a headman who is a permanent official sometimes the office is hereditary, sometimes elective, and if so, generally for life He is *ex officio* also president of the council The generic term is *sarpanch* but he is known in various castes by many titles—*chaudhri, padhan, mahto, jamadar, takht, muqaddam, badshah, mehtar, mahati, saqui*, etc There are also in many castes other permanent functionaries, either hereditary, or elected or nominated for life, their duties vary from vice-president to orderly Some of their names are *naib-sarpanch, munsif, darogha, diwan, mukhtar, chobdar, charidar, dhari, sipahi, piada* Other castes have several hereditary or elected assessors, for whom the generic term is *panch* Sometimes the entire assembly is quasi-permanent, consisting of the heads of families Actual instances will best show the variations that occur

6 *Instances of permanent councils*

(i) *Ahir* In Hardoi and Partabgarh, there is a permanent committee of a *sarpanch* and four *panches*, all hereditary In Gorakhpur, the *sarpanch* alone is hereditary the other *panches* are selected, one from each family, when required In Jhansi and Fyzabad, the council is impermanent

(ii) *Baghban* The committee consists of three or more hereditary members The president is known sometimes as *sarpanch*, when the other members are termed *padhans*, sometimes as *padhan*, when the others are termed *diwans*

(iii) *Banjara* The headman, known as *naik*, is hereditary, and in most subcastes his is the only hereditary office Amongst the Badi Banjaras, the whole committee is hereditary

(iv) *Banmanus* The headman (*chaudhri*) is hereditary This is a subcaste of the Musahar caste

(v) *Bari* The headman (*chaudhri*) is hereditary The other *panches* are selected as required

(vi) *Beldar* In Gorakhpur the headman (*chaudhri*) is elected for life, but there is a tendency to make the office hereditary by electing whenever possible the son of the last headman There is also a summoner (*dhari*) All the brethren are members of the assembly but to form a quorum not less than five of their exogamous groups (*kuris*) must be represented

(vii) *Bhoksa* The council is composed of the headmen of the villages (*chhota bhaiya* or little brother) the president is called *takht* (throne) whilst he has a *munsif* (vice president) and *darogha* (investigating officer) All these posts are hereditary A system of proxies is recognized

(viii) *Bishnoi* This sectarian caste has two councils of different kinds One deals with religious cases and is known as *jumala* It meets once a month either at some temple or at the house of a priest (*sadh*) the priest and some elders preside at the meeting, at which the *hom* rite is always carried out Once a year, in the month of Chait the Bishnois of several districts meet in a large joint *jumala* at Lodhipur in Moradabad The other council which deals with social offences, is found in such subcastes as possessed them before their members joined the sect (Jat, Khagi-Chauhan Nai Byar are some of them) These subcaste *panchayats* are permanent The decisions of the religious and social authorities are binding on each other

(ix) *Dakaut* In Bijnor the *panchayat* only assembles if there are at least ten items on the agenda The headman (*chaudhri*) is elected and is assisted by a *patwari rai* and *padhan* their precise functions are unknown to me Five towns or villages have a right to permanent representatives, namely Jhalu (three representatives) Nagina Seohara Nandawar and Nehtaur (two each) These are selected and hold office for life The committee therefore consists of nine persons In addition about five hundred brethren are usually present

(x) *Dhuniya* Each brotherhood has a hereditary

chaudhri, whose jurisdiction extends over tracts known as *ilaqa*, *baisi*, or *juwar*

(xi) *Ghogar* In Moradabad, every village possesses a hereditary assessor (*panch*), who decides cases in the first instance. There is an appeal to a committee of such *panches*

(xii) *Gidhiya* Each subcaste in Moradabad has a permanent committee of two or three hereditary members under a headman (*padhan*), who is to pay Rs 5 on his accession to office for the purchase of sweetmeats

(xiii) *Gujar* There is a permanent committee of four or five members in every village with a headman (*sarpanch*) all are hereditary For the trial of grave offences the *panchayats* of several villages meet together, under a headman, who is also permanent and hereditary

(xiv) *Jat* One brotherhood, which resides in a group of thirty-two villages in the Muzaffarnagar district, has a permanent *panchayat* The post of headman (*raja*) belongs to the head of a family in Bhainswal, the post of vice-president (*diwan*) to the head of a family in Oun, while the heads of three families that live respectively in Pindaura, Salawar, and Malahandi must always be present for the *panchayat* to be complete. This is an exceptional case, for all other Jat *panchayats* are impermanent

(xv) *Kahar* There is a permanent committee consisting of headman (*sarpanch*), vice-president (*naib-sarpanch*), summoner (*chobdar*), and four members

(xvi) *Kayastha-Mochi* In Cawnpore city, there is the usual type of permanent *panchayat*, though it is actually called a *sabha* In southern Cawnpore, there is a permanent headman, called *sarmaur* (crowned head), who resides in Charkhari state, but the *panchayat* meets only once a year

(xvii) *Kewat* The council is permanent, and consists of the heads of families under a hereditary *sarpanch*

(xviii) *Khagi-Chauhan* The committee consists of four members and a headman (*sarpanch*), all hereditary.

(xix) *Khatik* In Aligarh, the headman (*chaudhri*) is hereditary his assessors (of whom there are four or

five) are chosen for the occasion but there is a tendency always to select the same men and their sons after their death In Gorakhpur the Sonkhar subcaste has a headman (*chaudhri*) and six or seven *panches* all hereditary the Poldar subcaste has a *chaudhri* and *padhan* (vice president) both hereditary the Saqba subcaste has only a *chaudhri* elected for a single year at Dasehra In Bulandshahr every village has an officer known as *muqaddam* who decides minor cases, with a hereditary *chaudhri* and two *diwans* (vice presidents) to every hundred villages or so

(xx) *Khumra* Each village has a *chaudhri* of its own the assembly consists of all *chaudhris* some of whom form the permanent committee of the council In Bijnor the committee consists of the *chaudhris* of Nagina (*badshah*) who is headman of Jamdaspur (*wazir*) Tajpur and Sherkot (*munsifs*) These two *munsifs* are elected all other officers in the caste are hereditary

(xxi) *Kutamali* In Moradabad each separate village or quarter in a town has a *padhan* and *chakrayat* the latter acts as substitute for the former during his minority These officials decide all trivial cases The council consists of these officials (twenty-two of each) with two headmen (*sardar*) All are hereditary

(xxii) *Lal Begi Bhangi* In Benares the organization of the Lal Begis system of government is modelled on the city and cantonment in which they are employed There are seven administrative units or companies (*bera*) known as (1) *kali paltan* which serves the Indian infantry (2) *lalkurti* or redcoats, who serve the British infantry (3) *generelt* which dates back to the time when Benares possessed a divisional general and his head quarters staff (4 7) *sadr kothiwal, shahr* and *teshan* who are employed respectively in cantonments civil station city and railway settlement Each company has four officers (*sardar*) and a messenger (*piyada*) the titles of the officers are *jamadar* (headman) *munsif* (spokesman) *chaudhri* (treasurer) and *naib* (summoner) In supreme command is the brigadier He and the company officers are elected though there is a tendency to

observe the principle of heredity the messenger is selected

(xxiii) *Lohar* There is a hereditary committee, with a *chaudhri* but he is merely the summoner, and the president is selected for each meeting

(xxiv) *Nai* In Muzaffarnagar, there is a single *panchayat* for the whole caste. In Pilibhit, there are subcaste *panchayats* as well as the caste *panchayat* In Bulandshahr, every village has a *chaudhri* or headman There is also a *chaudhri* for each tahsil, and a head *chaudhri* for the whole caste, who lives at Delhi

(xxv) *Nanbai* This occupational group (it is not yet a caste) is ruled by a single headman (*sarpanch*) The Nanbai is a baker

(xxvi) *Tawaif* The Tawaif are dancing-girls, they have a *panchayat* of women The headwoman (*chaudhrain*) is elected for life, but must have been born within the jurisdiction of the *panchayat* Other members are selected when required

(xxvii) *Teli* There is a permanent and hereditary committee of five, from whom the headman (*chaudhri*) is selected for each meeting

(xxviii) *Tharu* The village headman is headman (*sarpanch*) of the brotherhood in his own village But there is also a hereditary headman for the whole caste (which has no endogamous subdivisions), who is known as *barbag* (great tiger) The post has been inherited in one family from time immemorial, and there is an old copper plate which is the headman's badge of office

(xxix) *Thathera* There are a number of hereditary headmen (*chaudhris*), as a rule there is one *chaudhri* to each village, but if the local jurisdiction covers more than one village, he can appoint assistants, known by the name of *mukhiya*,[1] whose duties are those of informers A *chaudhri* may also appoint an orderly (*sipahi*)

[1] *Mukhiya* is also the term for the 'village headman' appointed by Government, who has certain duties under the criminal law

7 Qualifications, methods and ceremonial of appointment

When a post is hereditary, the eldest son always succeeds, provided that he is of sound mind and good conduct If there is no son or the eldest son is unfit, the office goes either to the next heir or to some selected member of the same family A minor till he is of age is almost invariably represented by some elder relative though some castes cause the minor to announce a decision taken in his name When an office is elective or selective, the choice is made from among the persons best fitted by age or experience to hold it subject to any other condition of tenure that may be observed (e g that every family should be represented) but there is a tendency to follow the principle of heredity if possible (as amongst the Khatiks and Lal Begi Bhangis) Every post is held subject to mental fitness and good behaviour There is little information regarding the ceremonial of succession The emblem of office in the case of a headman (and often of other officers too) is a turban which is tied on the new officer s head in due form at a feast of the brethren In fact to wear the turban is synonymous with to be a head man Sometimes the officer pays for his own turban sometimes it is presented to him it is not an expensive crown

Panchayats meet in three different ways:

8 Meeting of a permanent panchayat

(i) *At a feast of the brotherhood* Any person who has a complaint to make, takes advantage of the presence of the brethren to put it forward whereupon the assembly ceases from conviviality and turns to business Controversial questions are seldom raised at a marriage feast lest the harmony of the proceedings be disturbed but funeral gatherings often resolve themselves into courts of enquiry

(ii) *On a special summons* which the headman issues either of his own motion or at the desire of an interested

[1] And, doubtless, also of the good temper which befits a convivial gathering.

party The meeting is convened through the official summoner if there is one, if not, the Nai barber, who works for the caste, acts as such

(iii) *On fixed occasions*, usually a fair or religious festival, at which brethren are likely to attend in large numbers Such meetings are sometimes monster *panchayats*, at which several brotherhoods assemble to discuss matters of general interest, such as the prohibition of liquor, the curtailment of marriage expenses, or the abandonment of such a custom as widow marriage

9 Procedure of a permanent panchayat

The procedure closely follows that of a court of law The charge is made the culprit is called on to plead guilty or not guilty A plea of guilty is followed by immediate sentence a plea of not guilty is followed by the hearing of evidence, discussion, voting, and a verdict and sentence All evidence is oral every brother who is present has the right to speak and vote. Every brother uses his private knowledge to guide him to a decision in fact, judge and jury are all potential witnesses Some castes require a unanimous verdict, others are satisfied with the decision of a majority generally, the permanent officials must be unanimous, and agree with the majority of the brethren present The permanent officials decide the verdict and sentence, which is announced by the headman The sentence takes various forms but if it is not, or cannot be, carried out at once, the offender is outcasted till it is carried out And if he refuses to submit to his sentence, he is outcasted till he does

10 Curiosities of procedure

Though the procedure of the *panchayat* is generally the same in all castes, so far as essentials are concerned, there are often minor peculiarities

(i) *Agrahri* If the council cannot arrive at a unanimous decision, the meeting is adjourned

(ii) *Bhotiya* A correspondent informed me that amongst the Bhotiyas of Kumaun, the debate is 'a babel of uproarious questions and answers' If a decision seems remote, from discussion the council turns to 'Socratic

questionings—presumably, attempts to extract admissions And if the Socratic method fails, the council has recourse to magic A fetish called *Bharto* which consists of a white stone tied round with a black woollen thread is produced for with his right hand on this, no man dare tell a lie

(iii) *Dom* The *chaudhri's* opinion prevails in the absence of unanimity

(iv) *Ghosi* In addition to other officers, this caste has an executioner who is responsible for seeing that the sentence is carried out

(v) *Kewat* The offender is compelled to stand on one leg whilst undergoing examination—a position which must discourage verbosity

(vi) *Lal Begi Bhangi* The procedure is complicated The brethren sit in three lines In the first, from right to left, sit the brigadier and the company officers [1] In the second and third lines are the private members Each party is in charge of the *piyada* of his company The company spokesmen (*munsifs*) act as counsel and examine the parties and their witnesses After evidence has been taken the privates vote then the three subalterns of each company (*munsif chaudhri* and *naib*) consult and when they are unanimous submit their opinion through the *munsif* to their company commander (*jamadar*) The company *jamadars* then confer and when they are unanimous report their decision to the brigadier who if he accepts it announces it to the meeting A private may only vote, or rise to a point of order if he does this, he must act with due respect

(vii) *Nat* In Bulandshahr, when a brother wishes to draw the attention of the council to an offence and the offender is himself present he cries *bal makkhi dekh kar khana*—look for hair and flies (in your food) before you eat This is the signal for an enquiry

(viii) In Garhwal there was, till quite recent times, an official called *dharmadhikari* whose post was recognized by Government He was a Brahman charged with the

[1] Cf par 6 (xxii) above.

duty of purifying outcastes The custom of official recognition has lapsed but outcastes still occasionally petition the district authorities to send them to the *dharmadhikari*

11 *Scope of a panchayat's jurisdiction*

Reports received at the census of 1911 showed that the offences triable by *panchayats* varied from caste to caste But when a report stated that the *panchayat* of a particular caste did not deal with a particular offence, it was not always possible to decide whether this meant that the *panchayat* could not do so, or merely that it had never had occasion to do so The information was not derived from a written code, but from the oral evidence of members of the caste and if no instance of the trial of a particular offence had occurred within the informant's memory, he might reasonably assert that such offences were not triable by the *panchayat* By comparison, however, of the offences triable by different *panchayats*, it is possible to frame a specimen list, as follows·

(i) Breaches of the commensal law, and of restrictions on eating, drinking, and smoking

(ii) Breaches of the marriage law

- (*a*) Seduction of a wife, or adultery
- (*b*) Immorality or concubinage
- (*c*) Refusal to carry out a marriage after agreement (breach of promise of marriage)
- (*d*) Refusal to carry out the *gauna* ceremony, i e to send a wife to her husband at the proper age
- (*e*) Refusal to maintain a wife (restitution of conjugal rights)
- (*f*) Marrying a widow without permission (when permission is necessary)

(iii) Breaches of caste custom in the matter of feasts

(iv) Breaches of the trade custom of the caste

(v) Killing of certain animals—the cow, sometimes the dog or cat

(vi) Insulting a Brahman

(vii) Criminal or civil cases that might have come before the regular courts, such as assault or debt

(viii) Retrial of criminal cases decided by the regular courts

The following general principles can be laid down with respect to this list of offences

(1) Any Hindu caste council would deal with offences falling under classes (i) (ii) (*a*) to (*e*) (iii), (v) and (vi) Only certain Hindu castes deal with offences falling under class (ii) (*f*)

(2) The trial of offences in class (iv) is much less common than it used to be the subject is examined in another chapter

(3) Very few castes deal with cases falling in classes (vii) and (viii) The Gidhiya, Ghogar Kanjar Nat, and Phansiya in the district of Moradabad are said to submit cases of assault and debt to their councils but this is probably uncommon Except in such cases as adultery or assault on a wife or a Brahman the *panchayats* seldom encroach on the jurisdiction of the magistrate and if other complaints were brought to them they would generally refer the parties to the courts And indeed the Indian loves a lawsuit the discussion of its various aspects and the intrigues incidental to it afford congenial intellectual exercise and also an adequate excuse for visiting the court-town Few complainants would willingly exchange the fierce light that beats on even a third class magistrate s court room for the dimness that surrounds the tribal mat [1] Little information is available regarding the retrial of criminal offenders, but undoubtedly such cases do occur though perhaps the *panchayat* among castes that are inclined to crime is concerned less with the offence itself than with the offender s clumsiness in being detected

(4) To a Muhammadan *panchayat* some of the cases mentioned [e.g those falling in classes (v) and (vi)] would not be offences at all others would come under

[1] The *panchayat* is usually seated on a piece of matting (*tat* or *chatai*).

their ordinary law. They would, however, deal with some breaches of the marriage law and with trade disputes

12 Forms of punishment

The most common punishments are fines, feasts to the brotherhood or to Brahmans, and outcasting temporary or permanent for some kinds of offence, pilgrimages, begging, and various forms of degradation are imposed Corporal punishment, though frequent at one time, is now unusual Amongst the Lal Begi Bhangis, for instance, an unfaithful wife was formerly tied to a tree and flogged with a broom whilst the ceremony of outcasting consisted in laying the offender on his face, removing his turban, pulling the edge of the tribal mat over his head and beating him with shoe or broom The results were sometimes fatal, and most castes have thought it advisable to abandon such practices. But, as the details given in the next paragraph prove, the councils are ingenious in devising punishments suitable to the crime

A fine is usually spent on sweetmeats for the assembled brotherhood, of which the *chaudhri* gets a double share But if the fine is large, it usually goes to a fund, which is expended on such public objects as the recitation of a *katha,* the feeding of Brahmans, or the purchase of vessels for the use of the community

13 Some actual trials and other miscellaneous information

The information in this paragraph all comes from reports received at the census of 1911

(i) *Ahir* In Fyzabad, the council delivers a verdict in cases of cow-killing, but does not pass sentence The offender is sent to a Goshain, who considers the evidence afresh If he agrees with the council's verdict, he passes sentence—usually a course of begging for two or three months

(ii) *Baghban* The tariff of punishments is as follows

(*a*) Adultery, intratribal,—

(1) by woman,—fine,

(2) by man —fine and restoration of woman or in the alternative payment of the bride price

(*b*) Adultery extratribal —

(1) if the other party is of a higher caste —fine

(2) if the other party is of a lower caste,—excommunication

(*c*) Breaches of the commensal law,—fine and a bath in the Ganges

(*d*) Cow killing —begging alms with the cow s tail tied to a staff sleeping at a Kumhar s furnace a bath in the Ganges a feast both to the brotherhood and to Brahmans

(*e*) Killing a dog or cat —fine a bath in the Ganges and a feast to Brahmans

(iii) *Banjara* The Gaur Banjaras in Bijnor in serious cases, force the offender to give a girl of his family in marriage to the family of the complainant This may be merely a quaint form of compensation or it may be meant as a degradation, since by the law of hypergamy the girl comes from the inferior family At all events, it is unfortunate for the girl since she becomes her family s scapegoat

(iv) *Beldar* In Gorakhpur a possible punishment is five kicks Presumably it is awarded for minor offences

(v) *Bhangi* In Cawnpore a man was found guilty of abducting a married girl who had not yet gone to her husband This was a most serious offence as a punishment the hair of half his head of one eyebrow one side of his moustache and half his beard were shaved his face was painted black, and he was excommunicated

(vi) *Chamar*

(*a*) In Ghazipur a *chaudhri* was outcasted for twelve years for showing partiality for his brother[1] —which seems a venial offence

[1] Kumhar furnace is reckoned most unclean.

A council of several *panchayats* interfered and reduced the penalty to a fine

(*b*) In the same district, a Chamar disgraced the caste by begging, and was outcasted Subsequently he settled down to regular labour and after his death, his son was reinstated on paying a fine of Rs 4 and feeding five Brahmans

(*c*) Some Chamars were convicted of cattle-poisoning in a court of law After release, they were outcasted for twelve years an offer to pay a fine of Rs 500 in lieu was rejected

(vii) *Darzi* In Etah, a family adopted the *dharauna*[1] form of marriage contrary to the custom The caste informally outcasted them On the suit of the offenders, a caste council assembled which sentenced them to pay a fine of Rs 200 and to feast the brethren

(viii) *Dhimar.* In Muzaffarnagar, a man was guilty of a serious breach of the restrictions connected with prohibited kin the other party was his sister's daughter He was hung by the hands to a tree, fined Rs 100, had to feast the brotherhood, and was outcasted for twelve years

(ix) *Dhobi* In Cawnpore, a regimental Dhobi was accused of having a Bhangi woman as his mistress. He offered to stand or fall by the evidence of a clerk, whose story went against him, and he was outcasted till he had feasted the brotherhood The introduction of a witness of another caste is most unusual

(x) *Dom* In Almora, the killer of a cow, during his pilgrimage, has to display the fatal implement to all passers-by. The pilgrimage lasts from three to six months, during which he must visit three shrines

(xi) *Gadariya* A wife complained that her husband had refused to readmit her to his house after she had been on a visit to her own relations The husband's plea

[1] The precise nature of the offence is not clear *Dharauna* is one of the maimed marriage rites, suitable for widows Presumably the substitution was of one kind of maimed rite for another

was that she was ugly The brethren excessively annoyed pointed out to him that his own looks left much to be desired gave him some trite information on the evanescence of physical charms and ordered him to take his wife back on pain of excommunication An unusual incident in this curious case was the presence of some government orderlies as unofficial advisers to the council

(xii) *Gidhiya* The Gidhiya s tariff of punishment is as follows

(*a*) Adultery, intratribal —a fine of Rs 5

(*b*) Adultery, extratribal —

(1) by a woman —excommunication

(2) by a man (i) if the woman is of a higher Hindu caste —a fine of Rs 5 (ii) if she is of a lower Hindu caste, or not a Hindu —excommunication

(*c*) Cow-killing —a course of begging a bath in the Ganges, and a feast to the brotherhood

(*d*) Breach of the commensal law —a bath in the Ganges and a feast to the brotherhood

(*e*) Breach of promise of marriage —a fine of Rs 2½ to Rs 5

(*f*) Assault and debt —a fine of Re 1 or Rs 2

(xiii) *Julaha* In Sitapur an adulterer was tied to a tree with an earthen pot on his head

(xiv) *Kachhi*

(*a*) In Hardoi a widow had an intrigue with a Lohar She was informally outcasted Her relations persuaded her to give him up and summoned a *panchayat* after collecting Rs 25 to pay the fine The case was at this stage when it was reported but my informant was told by one of the members of the council that the penalty would probably be a fine of Rs 30 and the feeding of fifty brethren

(b) A widower had a Chamarin mistress The council ordered him to pay a fine of Rs 100 and to turn her out He refused to do either He was accordingly outcasted and though she is dead, neither he, nor two sons he had by her, will ever be readmitted

(xv) *Kanjar* The cow-killer, in addition to more usual penalties, has to give a calf to a Brahman There is an ordeal by fire in cases of doubt Seven *pipal* and seven betel leaves are bound on the accused's palm with seven turns of a thread, and he has to walk seven paces with a redhot spud in his hand If this hand is burnt, he is convicted

(xvi) *Kumhar*

(a) In Cawnpore, a man was suspected of an intrigue with another man's wife He was accordingly informally outcasted by the Kumhars of several villages A council met, which, on his suing for pardon from each individual member, fined him Rs 25, which was subsequently reduced to Rs 5, as he was unable to pay the larger sum [1]

(b) A *chaudhri* had an intrigue with a married woman of the same caste He was fined Rs 75 The husband died before the *panchayat* was held, or he too would have been fined [2]

(c) A man had a wife of bad reputation, whom he could not control This gave rise to scandal, he accordingly arranged a meeting of the *panchayat*, and explained his difficulties He was found technically

[1] The fine, compared with that in the next case, was small but here there was no proof, but only suspicion (the accused was seen leaving the house of the complainant at night)

[2] Presumably for not keeping his wife under better control Compare the next case

guilty and was ordered to feed five Brahmans

(xvii) *Kunjra* In Gonda some Muhammadan Kunjras, being dissatisfied with the decision of their *panchayat* appealed to a *sajjada nashin* in the neighbouring district of Barabanki and settled the matter according to his advice The case was curious since an external authority overrode the *panchayat s* order

(xviii) *Mali* In Barabanki a Mali woman who assaluted a Brahman family priest (*purohit*) was fined Rs 10 she did not pay and both she and her husband were outcasted

(xix) *Nat* The tariff of punishments is as follows

(*a*) Adultery —fine with restoration of the woman or payment of the bride price in the case of a man

(*b*) Cow killing —a course of begging for forty days, a bath in the Ganges and a feast to the brethren and to Brahmans

(*c*) Breaches of the commensal law —a fine of Rs 5 to Rs 10 a bath in the Ganges, and a feast to the brethren and to Brahmans

(*d*) Breaches of promise of marriage —payment of the other party s wedding expenses

(*e*) Killing dog cat or ass —fine of Rs 2 to Rs 4

(*f*) Assault —a fine of Re 1 to Rs 4

(xx) *Phansiya* The tariff of punishments is as follows

(*a*) Adultery intratribal —

(1) by woman —fine

(2) by man —fine with restoration of woman or payment of bride price

[1] A *sajjada-nashi* i the Muhammadan priest in charge of an endowed mosque The ppeal was from custom t religion, and so possible in a Muhammadan caste

(*b*) Adultery, extratribal,—permanent excommunication.

(*c*) Breaches of commensal law,—

(1) eating *kachcha* food or smoking with the member of some forbidden caste, —fine, and a bath in the Ganges

(2) drinking water with the member of a forbidden caste,—excommunication

(*d*) Drunkenness,—fine, and a bath in the Ganges

(*e*) Breaches of custom in respect of feasts,—fine, or temporary excommunication till the feast is provided

(xxi) *Singhariya* The tariff of punishments is as follows

(*a*) Adultery, intratribal and extratribal,—as amongst Phansiyas

(*b*) Cow-killing,—a course of begging alms, a pilgrimage, a bath in the Ganges, and a feast to the brethren and to Brahmans

(*c*) Breaches of the commensal law,—a pilgrimage, a bath in the Ganges, and a feast to the brethren and to Brahmans

(*d*) Breaches of custom in respect of feasts,—as amongst Phansiyas

(xxii) *Tharu* The fine for adultery is very high, from Rs 250 to Rs 500 the *panchayat* receives 10 per cent of the fine

(xxiii) *Thathera*

(*a*) In Azamgarh, for an abominable act of immorality,[1] a man was for three days immersed up to the neck in a cess-pit, sent on pilgrimage to Puri and Benares, and made to feast the brethren

(*b*) In the same district, a man who had a Muhammadan mistress escaped with a fine and the usual feast because he was able

[1] Which was, incidentally, punishable under the Penal Code

to prove that he had never eaten food in her house otherwise he would have been excommunicated This case shows the value attached respectively to commensal pollution and extratribal immorality [1]

(xxiv) *Miscellaneous*

(*a*) In some castes a culprit who is sentenced to a fine that he cannot pay, may, in lieu, place the shoes of the assembly on his head—presumably one pair of shoes at a time This alternative means grave degradation

(*b*) A cow killer when on pilgrimage is occasionally compelled to wear a sheet which covers him from head to foot with holes for the eyes, and to give warning of his approach by ringing a bell—treatment similar to that of the leper in mediaeval times [2] Sometimes he has to drive a cow before him which he holds by the tail

14 Impermanent panchayat

In an impermanent *panchayat* there is no official responsible for bringing offences to its notice and the only person likely to do so is the person offended But it is an expensive business to convene a *panchayat* since the convener must provide adequate entertainment And if he lays his suit before an assembly of the brotherhood that has met for some other purpose he is likely to become unpopular for he is not only interfering with another s arrangements, but (since such gatherings are usually of a festive kind) he also runs the risk of marring the harmony of its proceedings Consequently a complainant would rarely call a *panchayat*

[1] But thi I not uncommon. I have heard of a case where a gentleman of high caste and good position who had a mistress of another caste was not excommunicated till he had drunk water in her house.

[2] 1904. I myself met such a pilgrim in the streets of Rai Bareli. I tried to discover hi caste but he wa not locally known and he himself would say nothing but *hatya* (guilt).

together, unless the offence were serious But if it were, then he would seldom need to do so, since public opinion would come to his assistance The brotherhood, individually and collectively, would send the offender 'to Coventry', cease all intercourse with him, and, in fact, outcaste him without enquiry or formality The onus would then fall on the offender he, or his relatives for him, must convene the *panchayat* to establish his innocence, or obtain a mitigation of sentence And this he would not be likely to do unless he were hopeful of success The result is that impermanent *panchayats* very seldom meet, it was recorded in 1911, for instance, that in Banda, the *panchayat* of the Hindu branch of the Chamargaur Rajputs had only met once within the memory of the oldest brother, and that the *panchayats* of the Muhammadan Chamargaur and the Baghel Rajputs had not met for at least three generations In such circumstances, it is not surprising to find that little information is available regarding the procedure of impermanent *panchayats* when they do meet In most cases, a *sarpanch* is selected to preside, *pro hac vice* and the council then investigates the case and passes sentence, in much the same way as if it were permanent Nor is it possible to give a complete list of castes that possess impermanent *panchayats* Besides the two Rajput septs already mentioned, such *panchayats* exist among the Moradabad Chauhans, the Ghosis, Jats, Kurmis, Lodhas, Orhs, and Turks, and the Chandel and Kachhwaha Rajputs and, in some places, among the Kayastha-Mochis, Kumhars, Luniyas and Sonars But many of the 'twice born' groups—all Brahmans, most Rajputs and the highest Vaisyas (Agarwal, Bhat, Umar)—have no *panchayat* of any kind They rely solely on the force of public opinion the offender is informally ostracized in the manner already described, and remains so all his days, and his children after him Various castes owe their existence to such ostracism one instance is the Moradabad Chauhan group, which springs from the Chauhan Rajputs And smaller groups of outcastes are to be found scattered up and down the country

5 Exceptional cases

(i) The Chandel and Kachhwaha Rajputs in Cawnpore have a peculiar system of their own. The offender who has been informally excommunicated approaches a leading clansman and requests him to take up the case. He calls the brotherhood together, appoints assessors and makes an enquiry. As the leading clansman is usually the same person at all times in the same neighbourhood there is a certain element of permanence in this system. On the other hand it differs from both the permanent and impermanent types of *pańchayat* in two ways. Firstly the leader will not move on his own or anybody else's initiative save the offender's and secondly the *panchayat* can only pronounce one of two decisions—a complete acquittal or a confirmation of the informal ostracism.

(ii) Among the Moradabad Jats the village elders deal with minor offences but if the offence is serious, the offender calls together the elders of several villages, from twenty five to sixty in number. They select a committee of five to ten elders from amongst themselves to investigate the case and a majority of the votes of this committee is decisive. There is no *sarpanch*. If the meeting takes place at a fair the offender convenes it through the secretary of the local Jat *sabha*.

(iii) In Banda the Muhammadan Chamargaurs have a curious procedure of their own. The outcaste who desires to be reinstated prepares food on a day fixed by himself and assembles not only his own brethren but the Hindu Chamargaurs and some Brahmans. If they consider that he may be reinstated they signify their opinion by eating his food but a single dissentient among the Muhammadans, and three or four amongst the Hindus would be enough to make his restoration impossible. Both the food ceremony and the presence of outsiders are unusual and in fact this seems to be not so much a case of appeal to a *panchayat* as a request for an expression of respectable opinion.

[1] Or rather causes to be prepared. No Hindu would eat food prepared by a Muhammadan.

16 *Interference of outsiders*

As a rule, none but a member of the brotherhood may speak or vote regarding a decision of his *panchayat*, though occasionally, when there is any doubt, an expert is consulted regarding the punishment, especially for religious offences In Almora, for instance, there is a regular official called *dharmadhikari*[1] who fixes the punishment in all such cases, especially cases of cow-killing He is a Tiwari Brahman, elsewhere any *dharmashastra* Brahman (i e one who is learned in the law) would serve I know of only four instances of interference with the decision of a *panchayat*

(i) The revision, in cases of cow-killing, of the decision of the Ahir *panchayat* by a Goshain (Fyzabad)[2]

(ii) The reversion of a Kunjra decision by a *sajjadanashin*[3]

(iii) In Banda, the Brahman *purohit* (priest) is present at and advises the *panchayat* of the Baghel Rajputs But it has not met for three generations

(iv) In the Mahalodhi subcaste of the Lodha caste, the work of the *panchayat* is done entirely by the *guru*, or spiritual adviser

In some parts of India, ruling princes have power to interfere in the decisions of caste *panchayats* and the story goes that political agents have exercised that power in the raja's name I know of no such case in the United Provinces But two instances have been reported from Shahjahanpur of interference by rajas in caste matters In one case, two brotherhoods of the Dhobi caste were uncertain in which jurisdiction (*thok*) a particular village lay both *chaudhris* claimed the *chaudhri's* fee of Re 1¼ One of them defeated his opponent by obtaining a written order (*parwana*) from the raja in whose estate the village lay authorizing him to collect it[4] In the other case, an aspirant to the post of *chaudhri* of another Dhobi *panchayat* based his claim in a court of

[1] In Garhwal, the *dharmadhikari* purifies outcastes see par 10 (viii)

[2] See par 13 (i)

[3] See par 13 (xvii) and *note*

[4] He made little by this, for he had to pay Re 1 out of the fee to the raja

law on the fact that his grandfather had been appointed *chaudhri* by the raja of the time[1]

1 Panchayats and exogamous group

It has been explained above[2] that the group ruled by any particular *panchayat* is a *biradari* or local section of an endogamous group But most brotherhoods of this kind are actually exogamous groups, in the sense that their members are (as the name implies) too closely re lated to intermarry It becomes necessary, therefore, to explain the connexion between the *panchayat* and the exogamous group as such This can best be done by refer ence to a particular case In Cawnpore the Dhanuk caste has five sections, named (i) Laungbarsa, (ii) Bad hik (iii) Kathariya (iv) Hazari (v) Taihal

(*a*) In East Cawnpore all five groups are endogamous, and there are five *panchayats*

(*b*) In South Cawnpore groups (i) and (ii) intermarry, the other three are endogamous There are here four endogamous groups, namely Laungbarsa Badhik Kathariya Hazari Taihal and four *panchayats* to correspond

(*c*) In North West Cawnpore groups (i) (ii) and (iii) intermarry the other two are endogamous There are here three endogamous groups and three *panchayats*

(*d*) In North East Cawnpore groups (i) (ii) (iii) and (iv) intermarry group (v) is endogamous There are here two endogamous groups and two *panchayats* This makes it clear that the *panchayat* is that of the *local endogamous group* Accordingly if a Taihal migrated from his home in South Cawnpore to a village in East Cawnpore, he could and would become a member of the local *biradari* whether he belonged to the same exogamous group or not for the Taihal group is endogamous everywhere But it would be different if a Laungbarsa made the same change For the southern endogamous group consists of Laungbarsas only whilst the eastern includes both Laungbarsas and Badhiks and if he became a member of the eastern *biradari* he would have to eat with and meet in *panchayat* Badhiks whose daughters

[1] The rajas in the two cases were different.
[2] Par ( ) and (*b*).

he could not marry. In short, though a *biradari* is in fact usually composed of persons who cannot intermarry, yet their membership depends not on that fact, but on the fact that they all belong to an endogamous group, coupled, of course, with the residential qualification

To this there is one real and one doubtful exception The real exception is the Rajput clan, which is always exogamous, yet if it has a *panchayat* at all, has one of its own But these clans are derived from the most diverse racial elements, they are entities so entirely independent that, prima facie, one would expect them to be endogamous, and the exception is more apparent than real [1] The doubtful exception is that of the Muhammadan Qalandars, the Calender of the Arabian Nights, a caste of bear and monkey showmen It is divided into three exogamous sections, named Khokhar, Ghorawal, and Chindi The Chindis have been outcasted by the other two groups, because they admitted to their community a Khokhar who betrayed to them the secret of certain Khokhar charms (*jadu*) None the less the three groups still meet in a common *panchayat*, of which the headman is actually a Chindi These can scarcely be true exogamous groups, since membership of such a group obviously depends on birth alone, and such an affiliation as that of a Khokhar to the Chindis is impossible. But, apart from this, the excommunication in all probability extended only to the particular Chindis concerned in the offence, and not to the entire group, so that whilst the outcaste Chindis would form a new endogamous group, the rest would still remain in communion with Khokhars and Ghorawals

[1] The usual explanation is that clan exogamy is due to the shortage of women, which makes endogamy impossible But this shortage of Rajput women is usually regarded as due to female infanticide, itself consequent on hypergamy, which is only a form of exogamy Possibly, since most, if not all, Rajput clans have ruled kingdoms in their time, their royalty was held to surpass racial differences whilst matrimonial alliances between rival kings, either as a result of conquest or to secure peace, were as common in ancient India as they were in other countries

18 *Caste sabhas*

A *sabha* is merely an association of persons united by some bond of common interest To mention only one instance the Mazdur *sabha* of Cawnpore is an association of labourers But there are a number of caste *sabhas* which are essentially a modern product They differ from *panchayats* in that they always have a much larger scope and that they handle, not the cases of individuals, but questions of general interest A few examples will serve to show the nature of their activities

(i) The Gaur Brahman Mahasabha deals with the affairs of the Gaur Brahmans, an important and widespread endogamous group It is a registered body consisting of a hundred delegates elected for a year under a president selected by the delegates, also for a year Its jurisdiction extends nominally to the whole of India but it has little influence where there are no local Gaur sabhas It meets yearly its objects are the reduction of expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies, the teaching of true religious principles the observance of religious rites and the encouragement of the study of Sanskrit

(ii) The Dan Tyagi Brahmana Prautia Sabha is the *sabha* of the Taga caste its objects are the diffusion of knowledge and education and possibly the assertion of that claim to Brahmanical origin which the name indicates [1]

(iii) The Vaisya Mahasabha is the executive committee of the Vaisya conference Its objects are the spread of education social reform and the reduction of expenditure at marriages and other festivals There are local *sabhas* in large cities whose duties are to give effect to the resolutions passed by the conference This Mahasabha has done excellent work in many directions —notably in advocating the raising of the age of marriage

[1] The Tag claims to be Brahman group that has taken to mundane pursuits (cultivation and landowning) and so refuses priestly dues (*dan tyagi*).

Other powerful bodies are the various Jat and Kayastha *sabhas* They are in no sense *panchayats*, but to a great extent they supplement their work, and they can be, and usually are, a great power for good [1]

[1] I am indebted to officers of the *sabhas* mentioned for these details

Principal authorities —*Census Report, U P*, 1911 (when a special enquiry into the system of caste government was made)
Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh* (1896)

CHAPTER VII

SECTARIAN CASTES

1 The growth of sectarian castes

Celibacy and asceticism are as a rule characteristics of the religious bodies of Hinduism It is strange, therefore, to find that some of these bodies include sections whose members marry and live as householders Such sec tions, where they exist have all the usual caste restrictions In the United Provinces there are four sectarian castes which differ in certain respects from one another the four are the Atith Goshain Bishnoi and Sadh

2 The Atith

The Atiths as a sect are a somewhat indefinite body The name seems to be little more than a synonym for Sannyasi Certain Atiths are known as Sannyasi Atiths, and these are regular ascetics others have taken to family life and are known as Gharbari They permit widow marriage and concubinage which shows that they are not of very exalted rank Some of their customs point to their ascetic origin for instance they do not burn their dead but throw them into the Ganges they wear clothes dyed in ochre (*geru*) carry a rosary of *rudraksha* beads and are saluted by the phrase *Namo Narayan* They are Saivas

3 The Goshain

The Goshains are spiritual descendants of Shankar Acharya They have two branches, the ascetic, known as Asandhari or Mathdhari, and the family branch known as Grihastha Initiation into the sect consists of two rites, the initi ation proper after which the novice, though regarded as a Goshain remains as it were a lay brother following his worldly avocations and living an ordinary family life The second rite is known as *vijaya homa* and after its comple tion the novice becomes a full Goshain (*vanaprasta*) and has to abandon the secular world, observe all the tenets

of the sect, and lead a celibate life This rite is usually postponed until the novice is forty or fifty years of age, as it involves the abandonment of wife and family. Apparently it is these 'lay brethren' who are Grihasthas, many, indeed, seem never to become *vanaprastas* at all, whilst of those that do, some (even *mahants* or heads of ascetic bodies) abandon all attempt to lead a religious life Some Goshains are traders, others are practically landholders, though nominally they are trustees for a deity of lands that have been given to his shrine

4 *The Sadh*

The Sadh or Satnami sect was founded by one Birbhan in 1543 It is a sect pure and simple, recruited from all castes As a group, however, the Sadhs are endogamous, distinctions of rank or wealth are ignored in arranging marriages and their formula of exogamy is that which forbids marriage into a family with which any previous intermarriage is remembered As a body, they are hard-working, industrious, and charitable to their own poorer fellows they live in one *muhalla* and eat and drink together The marriage rite, though based on the usual Hindu form (there is circumambulation, for instance, of the pair with clothes knotted together), is extremely simple There is infant betrothal, marriage takes place after puberty Divorce is permitted only as concomitant to excommunication from the sect Their creed is unitarian: they have 112 rules of faith, inculcating

(i) worship of one God,
(ii) modesty and humility,
(iii) truth and honesty,
(iv) praise of God,
(v) absence of covetousness,
(vi) the abandonment of caste distinctions,
(vii) simplicity of clothing,
(viii) vegetarianism and sobriety
and forbidding,
(ix) murder, tyranny, and violence,
(x) polygamy,
(xi) begging,
(xii) the observance of particular feast days

5 *The Bishnoi* The Bishnoi is perhaps the most curious of all sectarian castes Originally the Bishnois were disciples of one Jhambaji who lived between 1450 and 1500 A D They were never ascetics, in this resembling the Sadhs indeed one of Jhambaji s precepts is baptize your children They have eight endogamous sections—Jat Baniya, Brahman Ahir Sonar Chauhan Kasibi and Seth (or Shaikh) These of course correspond to the castes to which the members originally belonged They observe the rule of *gotra* exogamy and marry into no family so long as any tie of relationship is remembered They have a marriage ceremonial of their own and do not burn but bury their dead An account of their councils has already been given [1] The Bijnor Bishnois formerly used the title Shaikhji and the Muhammadan salutation *Salam alaikum* wore Muhammadan clothes and bore Muhammadan names This curious custom is explained by a story that they murdered a Muhammadan qazi who prevented them from burning a widow and compounded for the offence by pretending to adopt Islam The custom is now dying out

[1] See Chapter VI.

Principal uthorities.—Crooke, *Tribes and Cast s of th N W.P and Oudh* (1896)
Census R port U P 1911 p. 364 (for Bishnoi).

CHAPTER VIII

HILL CASTES

1 Distribution

There are only three main castes in the hill tracts, namely, the Brahman, Rajput and Dom In Almora in 1911, for instance, out of a total Hindu population of 518,000, 490,000 belonged to one or other of these three groups, in Garhwal, there were 459,000 out of 475,000 in the state of Tehri the figure was no less than 293,000 out of 299,000 Such other castes as are represented in the hills are not true hill castes their members are settlers, more or less permanent, from the plains, or in the case of the Bhotiyas, from Tibet. In 1911 there were, for instance, some 3,000 Banias, 9,000 Bhotiyas, 8,000 Faqirs and 2,000 Gurkhas in Almora, of whom the last-named are troops cantoned in the district, whilst the Faqirs are attracted by its numerous holy places, but these are the only Hindu castes with over 1,000 members Similarly, in Garhwal, the only castes apart from the Brahman, Rajput and Dom with over 1,000 members were the Bania (2,000), Bhotiya (3,000), Chamar (1,000), Faqir (3,000) and Gurkha (2,000), whilst in Tehri there were 3,000 Chamars and no other caste with over 1,000 members [1]

2 Hill Brahmans and hill Rajputs

The hill Brahman and hill Rajput both differ widely from their brethren in the plains In 1911 the Brahman caste was recorded at the census under twelve main subcastes, the Rajput under forty-three principal clans But in 1911, in Almora, Garhwal and Tehri, out of 297,000 Brahmans only 3,750 [2] belonged to one or other of the

[1] There are hill tracts in Naini Tal and Dehra Dun, but their figures are not referred to above because they also possess submontane tracts, and this fact makes it impossible to treat their figures as symptomatic of hill districts Garhwal possesses submontane tracts, but they are of small extent

[2] Gaurs 571, Kanaujiyas 387, Saraswatis 2,752, Panchdravids 40

twelve subcastes and only 139[1] Rajputs in all out of 700 000 to one or other of the forty-three clans These figures sufficiently prove that the hill Brahmans and Rajputs are *sui generis*

3 *Origin of the hill Brahmans and Rajputs The Khasas*

About these hills, writes the Moghul ruler Babar are other tribes of men With all the investigation and enquiry I could make among the natives of Hindustan I could get no sort of description or authentic information regarding them All that I could learn was that the men of these hills were called Kas It struck me that as the Hindustanis frequently confound (the letters) *shin* and *sin* and as Kashmir is the chief city in these hills, it may have taken its name from that circumstance Babar s shrewd conjecture is supported by more evidence than he knew for the recurrence of the word Kas or Kash in the nomenclature of the hills is too striking to be the result of mere chance We have for instance, Kashgar Kashmir Karakash Hindu Kush the Khasa tribe in Kashmir the Khasiya Rajput and Brahman in Kumaun and the Khas sept in Nepal The word is usually derived from the name of the old Khasa race The existence of this race is well established It is referred to in the Vishnu and Vaya Puranas, and in the Mahabharata where it is described as a northern tribe which brought presents of *paipilika* gold—that fabulous gold so frequently mentioned by classical writers which was collected by ants (*pipilaka*)—a fact that possibly indicates that the Khasas were carriers of Tibetan gold dust The Khasas are probably the Cesi of Megasthenes the *Mudra Rakshasa* names them as one of the confederacy of *mlechcha* tribes arrayed against Chandragupta and Manu puts them amongst his *vrisala* castes of degraded Rajputs

The hill Brahmans and Rajputs are usually regarded as being partly the original inhabitants of the hills, partly as

[1] P wars or Chauhan 36, Bundela

Others supposed Hindu Kush to be a corruption of Indicus Caucasus McCrindle *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arria* (1877), pp. 81 2 *note*

[2] Herodotus, III 102-5; Arrian, *Anabasis* V 4, 7; Strabo, XV; Aelian, Pli y Propertius and many others,—for list see *McCrindle* op. cit. p. 96, *not*

degraded Brahmans and Rajputs who have immigrated from the plains Each caste has a branch called Khasiya, who consider themselves to be degraded immigrants, but are more probably connected with the ancient Khasas

4 *The hill Brahman*

In the hills and especially in Garhwal, there are three kinds of Brahman, the Sarola, Gangari and Khasiya According to Mr Atkinson[1] some 90 per cent of all Brahmans in Kumaun are Khasiyas

(*a*) *The Sarola and Gangari* It would seem that Gangari is originally a local appellation meaning 'dweller by the Ganges', applied to everybody, of whatever caste, who lives by that river The Sarolas are Gangaris who have become differentiated by a change of function, according to one account they were the cooks of the army of a raja when in the field At the present day many of their sections still seem to devote themselves to cooking, though some are in the civil service of the rajas, some are teachers and some domestic servants The Gangaris are mostly priests of the village deities, and of Bhairon, the Sarolas, unorthodox though they may be in their ritual, at all events profess to worship the orthodox deities The names of most of the Sarola sections are derived from the village of origin (*thal*) of the section Some of the chief Gangari subdivisions are attached to the service of particular temples

(*b*) *The Khasiya* Most Khasiyas are cultivators, and unlike respectable Brahmans of the plains, plough themselves There are some 250 sections, mostly derived from the villages where they live In recent times many Khasiyas have tried to establish connexion with the plains, claiming to be some Tiwaris, some Chaubes, others, Pants, Pandes, Joshis, Upadhyas, Pathaks, Gaurs, and Kanaujiyas, but the great majority make no such pretence, and have no knowledge at all of *sakha* or *pravara*,[2] and very little even of their *gotra* Some sections have functions of

[1] *Himalayan Gazetteer*, Vol III, pp 399, 428, (1886)

[2] *Sakha*, a body of persons following a particular school of Vedic teaching, *pravara*, a group of *gotras* having sacrificial fires in common

their own The Kanseris are priests of Bibhandeswar a name of Siva the Rasyars are cooks (*rasoiya*) the Nangis supply *purohits* to the Bhotiyas the Phulrais supply flowers for the Nanda Devi temple the Ghatbhananiyas perform funeral rites for persons who die without water The Dobhals[1] are exorcists who specialize in demoniac possession the Oliyas avert the evil effects of hailstorms (*ola*) A few may worship orthodox deities but the great mass are servants of Bhairavas and *bhuts*—village priests devil priests, and so on

5 Marriage rules of the hill Brahman

The marriage rules of these Brahmans are curiously lax Sarolas as a rule intermarry but it is not impossible for a Sarola to take a Gangari bride If he does, the offspring are Gangari not Sarola and the result is that there are not only pure Sarolas and pure Gangaris but Gangari subclans attached to Sarola clans The offspring of a Sarola by a Gangari concubine also becomes a Gangari but there is a difference between such children and those by a legitimate Gangari wife for instance the child of a Gairola (a Sarola clan) by a Gangari wife is called Sarola-Gangari a child of a Gairola by a Gangari concubine is called Gangari-Gairola Persons of the mixed blood can only marry with Gangaris Offspring of Sarolas by Khasiya concubines similarly become Khasiyas Certain of the higher Gangari sections—the Dobhal Unyal Dangwal and Bughara—are strict in their marriage rules for instance the wife of a man of any of these clans if belonging herself to a lower clan is forbidden to eat with her father s family after marriage a curious and possibly unique prohibition Some Khasiyas have lately begun to intermarry with Gangaris, especially the Ghidwals, who pretend to be Gangari Ghildyals, and the Belwals these latter are a subcaste degraded because they accept impure gifts, such as cows that bleed at the udder and oxen on which the shadow of a snake has fallen though one would imagine that such animals were too rare to cause any appreciable amount of pollution

[1] Of Dobha village There is a Dobhal clan amongst Sarolas, Gangaris and Khasiya alike.

6 *The hill Rajput*

According to Mr Stowell, there used to be three classes of Rajputs, the high caste, second class or ordinary, and third class or Khasiya Rajput, but many of the Khasiyas did not rank as Rajputs at all Sir J A Baines describes the true hill Rajput as keenly jealous of his dignity, observing four maxims of conduct—never to drive a plough, never to marry his daughter to an inferior, never to accept money for his daughter's betrothal, and never to allow his women to neglect the custom of seclusion Most of them, in consequence, were wretchedly poor, and eked out a precarious existence by hunting and hawking Necessity has overcome the scruples of many and driven them to agriculture, the Kanet Rajputs of Dehra Dun are now all husbandmen Other distinctions have also broken down, says Mr Stowell The most respectable members of the first group still as a rule intermarry amongst themselves But even with them it is becoming more a matter of the material position of the individual than of the former status of the clan For instance, the poorer members of the Ringwara Rawat clan (first class) have begun to intermarry with Rajputs of the second class and even with prosperous Khasiyas A Khasiya enlisted and rose to the rank of subedar-major, he has been able to marry his daughters to high caste Rajputs No distinction is made between the giving and taking of girls amongst these clans Even foreigners have been able to advance successful claims to the status of Rajputs A family of Tibetan lamas have settled down in Garhwal and been transformed into a class of Lama-Negis, who intermarry with low class Rajputs Many of the Khasiya sections are named after the village of origin (*thât*) All of them are engaged in agriculture and petty trade, occupations that the true Rajput anywhere, but especially in the hills, disdains to follow, they worship chiefly the village gods, are served by Khasiya Brahmans, and do not wear the *janeo* or sacred thread, though, according to Mr Pauw in his Settlement Report for Garhwal in 1896, many have begun to usurp it Their marriage rules to some extent vary from place to place.

7 The hill Dom

The origin of the Doms in the hill tracts of Kumaon is so far an unsolved puzzle Mr Crooke regards them as the relics of the original inhabitants of the country, who were enslaved by the immigrant Khasiyas, and mentions the local belief that the Dom is descended from the Dasyu of the Vedas Mr V A Stowell (whose knowledge of the hill castes has been unrivalled in recent years) holds the same view Mr Edye who made some special enquiries as Census Superintendent in 1921 states in his *Census Report*[1] that he could find no evidence to support or rebut this theory and surmises that Dom is merely a generic name applied to an inferior social class composed of those sections of the people that took to degrading occupations It seems certain that a race of that name once inhabited the hills, for the name Dom or Dum is found everywhere from Jammu to Kumaon but judging from the facts observed not only in this province but in the Punjab it seems very likely that the name was extended to all low castes and occupations—just as Nishada originally the name of a particular tribe, came to mean any outcaste In the present state of our information further speculation is useless So much only is certain that the hill Dom has no connexion whatever with the Dom tribe in the plains save the similarity of name and it is for this reason that the hill Doms dislike and so far as they can repudiate it

8 The Dom occupational group

It has long been known that the hill Doms have a tendency to combine into occupational groups Lists have been prepared at different times, which vary considerably I have no less than five such lists before me The earliest of these is that of Mr Atkinson in the old *Himalayan Gazetteer* which dates back to the eighties and relates to the Garhwal district The second was compiled by Pandit Jwala Dat Joshi in the early nineties, and purports to relate to the whole of Kumaun but is certainly incomplete it can however be completed by using the

[1] *Census Report U P* 1921 Appendix C.

census lists of 1891. The next two both belong to 1911, and were prepared one by Mr Stowell for Garhwal, one for Almora by Mr Panna Lal; the former is incomplete, for it omits groups that existed in Garhwal at an earlier date, and are still to be found. The last is Mr. Edye's list of 1921, which relates to Kumaun as a whole, it includes more groups than previous lists, and all groups which may be regarded as 'authenticated' I give these lists below I have completed Pandit J D Joshi's list by inserting names found in the census lists of 1891, and Mr Stowell's by adding all names found both in the former Garhwal list and in later lists. (These additions are in italics.)

Circa 1885	Circa 1895	Stowell 1911	Panna Lal 1911	1921	Occupation
Agari		Agri		Agri	Iron smelters
Lohar	Lohar	Lohar	Lohar	Lohar	Iron smiths
Tamta	Tamta	Tamta	Tamta	Tamta	Copper smiths
	Tirwa			Tirwa	Tin smiths and knife grinders
Ruriya	Baruri	Ruriya	Ruriya or Bairi	Ruriya Bairi Dhanik	Basket makers
Auji or Darzi	*Auji*	*Auji*	Auji	Auji	Tailors, drummers
	Darzi			Darzi	Tailors
Dholi	Dholi	*Dholi*	Dholi	Dholi	Tailors, drummers
			Turi	Turi	Trumpeters
Hurkiya	Hurkiya	Hurkiya	Hurkiya Damai	Hurkiya	Drummers
Badi	Badi	Badi		Badi	Dancers and singers
Orh	Orh	Orh	Orh	Orh Raj	Masons
	Barghi		Bare	Barai	Stone masons
Chamar or Bairsawa	Chamar	Chamar	Chamar		Workers in leather
	Sarki		Sarki		
	Mochi	Mochi	Mochi	Mochi Chanal	
Chunyar	*Chunara*	Chunara		Chunera	Turners
Barhai or Orh	*Barhai*	*Barhai*	Barhai	Barhai	Carpenters

Circa 1885	Circa 1895	Stowell 1911	Panna Lal 1911	1921	Occupation
...			Parki	..	Makers of wooden vessels
..			Hankiya	Hankiya	Potters
..		..		Panri	
Dhunar or Mallah	Dhuni	Dhunar	Dhuni	Dhuniya	Labourers
...		..	..	Bakhariya	Labourers and menials
..		..		Jamoriya	Cultivators
Pahri	*Pahariya*	*Pahri*	Pahari	Pahri	Watchmen
Bhul	Bhul	*Bhul*	Bhul	Bhul	Oil pressers
Koli	Koli	Koli	*Koli*	*Koli*	Weavers
..	Barura			Barura	Sack-makers (ex Jats)
Darya		*Darya*			Sorcerers
Dhaki	*Dhaki*	Dhaki			Outcasted Khasiyas
..	*Dhobi*	..		Dhobi	Washermen

The Agari or Agri are iron smelters by tradition but as long ago as Mr Atkinson s time, they were already giving up an illpaid and dangerous occupation for road making and general labour The Tamta corresponds to the Kasera of the plains The Tirwa used to be a tin smith he is now a sword and knife grinder The Ruriya makes baskets, sieves and other articles of bamboo the group seems to have thrown off two branches, Bairi and Dhanik of which the former in 1911 was a mere synonym for Ruriya Auji Darzi and Dholi are all connected Forty years ago Auji and Darzi were merely different names for the tailor group whilst the Dholi was an old offshoot of that group that had changed its occupation to drumming It would seem as if the two functions (which make a curious pair) have not yet been fully differentiated The Hurkiya and Badi are both wandering musicians the latter is regarded as a Nat in the plains The Orh Bare or Barai and Barhai are all related the last two are branches of the first which is one of the main divisions. The Chunara corresponds to the Kunera of the plains The Dhunar or Dhuniya is an agricultural labourer the Bhul corresponds to the Teli and is some times so called The Koli corresponds to the Kori and

is another of the old divisions. The Baura used to allege that he was no 'Dom', but an ex-Jat he is now a sack-maker The Dhaki too is not a 'Dom', but a group of outcasted Khasiyas There is a certain mystery about the Chanal Mr Edye states that the group had been in existence for at least fifty years, and that it then gave up the occupation of weaving for its present occupation (shoe making and leather work). But the name is found in no previous list On the other hand the Chamar, found in all lists till 1921, then disappeared The hill Chamar refused to answer to that name, and called himself Baiswara or 'outcaste'. 'Chanal' is simply 'Chandal', which also means outcaste, so, in all probability, the present day Chanal is merely the Chamar under a new name

9 *The marriage rules of the hill 'Dom'*

The endogamous restrictions of the hill 'Doms' are extraordinarily indefinite, they vary not only from place to place, but from time to time Mr Atkinson says nothing of the matter, but arranges the occupational groups in four classes according to social precedence, and no doubt these had some effect on intermarriage The four classes were as follows ·

1 Koli, Tamta, Lohar, Orh, Dhaki, Barhai.
2 Bhul, Chunyar, Ruriya, Agari, Pahri
3. Dhunar, Darya, Chamar
4. Badi, Hurkiya, Darzi or Auji, and Dholi

Pandit J D Joshi is the first to tell us anything definite about the Dom's endogamous restrictions According to him the Chamar, Dholi, Badi, and Hurkiya were endogamous groups the rest were exogamous and intermarried, though a group that prospered was apt to become endogamous Mr Stowell, in 1911, arranged the occupational groups into endogamous sections Of these, three consisted of a single group each—namely, the Koli, the Dhunar, and the Mochi, the rest consisted of two or more exogamous groups that intermarried These were ·

(1) Agri, Lohar
(2), Lohar, Tamta, Ruriya, Chunara, Orh, Barhai, Pahri.

All that can be made of such evidence as this is that though there is a tendency towards endogamy, there is as yet nothing resembling caste endogamy, whilst the sub-caste endogamy is still extremely fluid

The rule of exogamy is simple, the descendants of a common ancestor will not intermarry, so far as the relationship is known The marriage age for girls is eight to ten years, when a girl has passed the age of puberty unmarried, she is allowed to select her own husband. Widow marriage and the levirate are practised, whilst concubinage is permitted, the children of a concubine apparently inherit, but are regarded as inferior to the children of a wife as they cannot join in the worship of deceased ancestors. The custom of *ghardamada*, where the bridegroom carries out a period of service before he receives his bride, is common A wife who is an outcaste, a lunatic, or a leper may be divorced, a divorcée, so long as she was not put aside on account of disease, may become a concubine, but may not be remarried Commensal restrictions, as usual, follow the marital restrictions, endogamy connotes the prohibition against eating food cooked by any but a fellow casteman.

10 The panchayat system in the hills

Outside the towns such as Srinagar, Almora or Ranikhet, there appears to be no system of caste *panchayats* in the hills Their place is taken by the village *panchayats* Of these the *padhan* or *mukhiya* (village headman) is, *ex officio, sarpanch* Members of all respectable castes belong to these councils, lower castes are allowed to invoke them to settle their affairs, but seem to have no voice in their deliberations These councils deal not only with social disputes, but with matters that would normally come before a law court, civil or criminal, and frequently decide them finally In Garhwal, the councils also make the arrangements for periodical festivities In Almora, the *panchayat* is a primitive court of justice the accused if found guilty has to sign a *kail-nama* which is countersigned by all members of the *panchayat* and handed to the complainant Fine is the usual punishment, but *gauhatiya* or cow-killing demands, as usual, a severer

expiation In Garhwal the *dharmadhikari* already referred to,[1] purifies the offender who has been convicted and so makes his reinstatement in caste possible but in Almora he decides what the punishment shall be, after the *panchayat* has found the offender guilty thus playing the part of a judge to their jury Persons dissatisfied with a *panchayat* s decision can and do have recourse to the regular courts

11 *Summary*

Sir Richard Burn [2] following Mr Atkinson in his *Kumaun Gazetteer* pointed out that the social system as found in the Kamaun hills is far closer to the system described by Manu than the social system found anywhere else in India It is indeed more primitive even than that The marriage rules of all castes are extremely lax compared with the rules of their fellow Hindus in the plains The various classes of Brahmans intermarry with no more unpleasant result than a certain loss of status the Rajput clans regard rather the material position of the bridegroom than his birth and ancestry the Dom sections are, within certain limits exogamous Not only so but the Brahman often takes a Rajput woman to be his concubine without incurring social obloquy the Khas Rajput will accept to wife the daughter of a Dom if the Dom be prosperous In a word caste endogamy though it may be regarded as highly desirable is not imperative and that was also the state of affairs, not only in Manu s time but in the time of Megasthenes Occupation too has not yet been able to break up the Dom race into strictly endogamous groups though no doubt the tendency is in that direction but in Manu s time occupational castes were already in existence and to find a parallel it will be necessary to go back certainly as far as Megasthenes when occupational castes were beginning to take shape and possibly even further back still The hill *panchayat* has obviously no connexion with the caste *panchayat* of the plains its descent is totally different The caste *panchayat* traces its origin

[1] See Chapter VI pa 10 (iii).
[2] *Census Report U.P* 1901 pp. 215-6.

to the guild councils there is nothing resembling a guild in the hills The Kumaun *panchayat* seems clearly to be the modern representative of a primitive village court of justice, such as one would expect to find in a mountainous region where access to any central court would be difficult at all times, and at some times impossible [1] The social system of the hills is, therefore, so far as Hinduism is concerned, in many important respects *sui generis*—much simpler, much more primitive, than the system of the plains

[1] Before the United Provinces Village *Panchayat* Act was passed in 1920, village as opposed to caste *panchayats* were not commonly found in the U P, whatever may be the case in other parts of India

Principal authorities —L T Atkinson, *Kumaun Gazetteer* (1886)
Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh* (1896) (especially Gangari, Khasiya, Dom)
Census Report, U P, 1911, pp 345, 355-6 (where the information is based on communications from Mr A A Stowell and Mr Panna Lal)
Census Report, U P, 1921

CHAPTER IX

GIPSY CASTES

1. The use of the name gipsy

In northern India are to be found wandering about the country numerous vagrant tribes true nomads, living in temporary huts and wretched tents, and for the most part criminally inclined These tribes in ethnographical works and census reports are generically known by the term gipsy The use of this term is illegitimate being based on a fancied connexion between them and the gipsies of Europe which has been the object of much learned but inconclusive research So much is possibly true, that some European gipsies originally came from India, for there are many resemblances between the Hindi and the Romany vocabularies But that fact does not warrant the tracing of a relationship between European gipsies and the present vagrant tribes Hindi is the general language no important similarities have been noticed between Romany and the special dialects spoken by the vagrant tribes, which indeed are as a rule merely argot or thieves Latin It has been suggested that the words Rom Romany Romnichal are variants of the Hindu caste name Dom But the root ro or rom is found in other languages [1] whilst even if the derivation were correct it is not certain that the Dom is akin to the Nat the Habura the Kanjar *et hoc genus omne* Apart from these linguistic similarities, the only point of resemblance between European gipsy and Indian vagrant is a general similarity of habits The term gipsy , as used in these pages connotes no

[1] e.g. Coptic, and (according to Herodotus) ancient Egyptian—in both cases in the sense of man which meaning the root also bears in Romany In Greek and Latin, the root means strength (Greek *ῥώμη*, Latin *robur*). The names Rom and Romany have also been connected with Roumania and the Turkish Roum On the whole question see Crooke *Tribes and Castes of the N W P and Oudh* (Dom); and *N.-W. Provinces of India* (1897), p. 2 6.

theory of the origin of our Indian vagrant tribes, and is merely retained because it is in general use

2 *The scope of the term 'gipsy'*

But if the use of this term is illegitimate, its scope is also ill-defined. Some writers would include amongst 'gipsy' castes, groups which are compelled by their occupations to wander about the country. In one of his earlier works, for instance, Mr Crooke described as 'gipsies' the Saiqalgar, a knife grinder, and the Baheliya, a hunter.[1] On the same principle one could also include the Bisati and Ramaiya peddlers, the Banjara, Belwar, and Rahwari carriers, the Kewat and Mallah boatmen, and the Aheriya hunter. Another source of confusion is due to the use of the term, still more loosely, for those tribes known to the police as 'vagrant and criminal', yet there are many tribes, rightly branded as criminal, which are not truly vagrant, just as there are tribes truly vagrant, which are not really or entirely criminal. In this discussion, only the true vagrants are described—namely, tribes that have no settled abode and no home but their tents. Tribes that have permanent homes which they leave from time to time in pursuit of their trade or of crime are ignored.

3 *Grouping of the gipsy caste*

There are fifteen castes which can be regarded as truly gipsy—namely, the Badhik, Barwar, Bauriya or Bawariya, Bengali, Beriya, Bhantu, Habura, Kanjar, Karwal, Maghaya Dom, Nat, Qalandar, Sansiya and Sanaurhiya. They fall into certain groups

(1) The Beriya, Bhantu, Habura, Karwal, and Sansiya possess so many and such striking affinities that they may be regarded as offshoots of a single nomadic race. Their customs, traditions, and religion resemble each other. Their favourite deities are Kali, Devi, and Muhammadan saints such as Zahir Pir and Madar Sahib. The Beriyas and Haburas both trace their origin to the ruined town of Nohkhera in Etah district. Bhantus claim Beriyas, Haburas claim Beriyas, Bhantus, Karwals, and

[1] *N.-W. Provinces of India*, pp 212 and 99

Sansiyas as branches of their respective tribes Beriyas and Karwals intermarry Sansiyas call themselves Bhantus Sansiyas and Beriyas have the same legendary ancestor To this group may also be affiliated the Bengali who seems to be what in Bengal is called the Bediya (Beriya) And though the affinities are less striking there can be little doubt that the Kanjar also belongs to this group The Kanjar claims the Habura the Habura claims the Kanjar as a subcaste Kunchbandhiya and Bhains are both subcastes of both Kanjar and Beriya and in the latter case, also of Sansiya Of these tribes all but the Bengali are proclaimed under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1911 (there are few Bengalis in the United Provinces) All Kanjars, however are not criminals many are poor but fairly respectable hunters and *shikaris* But Beriya Bhantu Habura Karwal Sansiya only differ as regards criminality, in the matter of degree

(ii) The Nat The word Nat means dancer and is an occupational term including a number of different clans who have been grouped together merely on account of their common occupation of dancing prostitution and performance of various primitive industries These industries are however all of a particular kind Amongst Nats are found dancers, tumblers acrobats of every variety makers of combs, articles of grass and straw and metal conjurers jugglers snake-charmers tattooers musicians, thimble riggers quack doctors—in a word all those nondescript vagrants who wander about from country fair to country fair making a living which is always disreputable and often dishonest They are probably recruited from many strata of society and are of different racial stocks There is a certain amount of similarity between them and the great nomad group mentioned above (Nat for instance is a sectional name amongst Beriyas, Haburas, and Kanjars Many of them are naturally enough petty thieves and their women are mostly prostitutes Nevertheless, the Nats may be regarded as forming a group of their own though there are affinities with the

Crooke *Tribes and Castes of the N W P and Oudh* Vol. IV p. 56.

Habura-Kanjar group on one hand, and the Banjaras on the other

(iii) Badhik, Bauriya, Barwar, Sanaurhiya. All these castes are tribes of mixed origin, formed originally of out-castes and broken men of all kinds, who came to them as to a sort of cave of Adullam The Badhiks[1] know little of their origin, but vaguely claim a Rajput descent. The Bauriyas with extraordinary unanimity (and the tribe is scattered all over India) claim to be connected with the Rajputs of Chithor, whose vassals and mercenaries they were The siege of Chithor in 1305 sent them to wander about the country as thieves and robbers. There is some reason for believing that Badhiks and Bauriyas are related Barwars claim to be descended from some outcasted Kurmis of Yahyapur in Saran The Sanaurhiyas claim Brahman descent and are a regular confraternity, formed for the commission of crime

(iv) The Qalandar is a vagrant of the same type as the Nat, but he is a Muhammadan, and his speciality is exhibiting trained animals, especially bears, monkeys and goats

(v) The place of the Dom in this medley of castes is obscure Most authorities hold that Dom was probably the name of an aboriginal race, as indeed it is still in the Himalayan hills And it is tempting to suppose that the race, of which the allied vagrant tribes (which form the first group) are branches, was the Dom race But it is impossible to trace any connexion between these tribes and either the Dom tribe in general or the Maghaya Doms in particular It is more probable that the Dom was not at first a criminal or even a vagrant tribe, though it was doubtless extremely primitive, that under the pressure of Aryan and other invasions, it was broken up and driven into the wilds, where certain groups of the tribe took to crime and vagrancy in pursuit of crime It is, therefore, more nearly akin to the third group

[1] Sanskrit *Vadhaka*, murderer One of the chief Badhik exploits was the murder of Mr Ravenscroft, B C S, in Bahraich in 1823

4 Description of the customs of certain castes The Barwar

The Barwar caste has three subdivisions, the Ghulam (slave), Swang (master), and Tilam The Ghulams are kidnapped children of various castes, and their descendants the Swang are pure Barwars the Tilams are children kidnapped by the Ghulams, or their descendants Swangs are now endogamous Ghulams and Tilams apparently intermarry and eat together whilst both eat food cooked by Swangs, though the Swangs refuse to eat food cooked by them Their marriage customs are much the same as those of low caste Hindus and may be summarized as follows Marriage is both adult and infant Two wives may be married at a time and the two may be sisters provided the elder is married before the younger Concubinage within the tribe and divorce are both permitted the divorcee may not be remarried but may become a concubine Property goes half to the legitimate children half to the children of Barwar concubines the offspring of outsiders have no rights of inheritance A Swang who marries an outsider becomes a Ghulam The levirate is permitted but not enforced widow marriage is allowed There is no permanent *panchayat* though the *sahua* or commander of the gang has certain powers and privileges in the matter of booty Generally speaking after a deduction of 3¾ per cent from the stolen property (which goes to the gods) 28 per cent is set aside which is equally divided between the thief and the *sahua* the remaining 68¼ per cent is then divided equally amongst the whole gang including the thief and the *sahua* There are, however different rules for gold coin silver coin coral beads and pearls cloth and arms— which last go entirely to the thief There is also another official known as the *dhebra* who is a sort of regimental quarter master being responsible for feeding the gang The caste has an elaborate thieves Latin which seems to be chiefly corrupted Hindi e g *namut* (*manush*—man) *ban* (*man*—woman) *sahajan* (*mahajan*—merchant), *bajar* (*hazar* or *hajar*—a thousand) *songala* (*bangala*—bungalow) *dehanu* (bribe) *sithai* (*mithai*—sweetmeats) *phunk*

(a buffalo—probably onomatopoeic) are some of the most obviously Hindi words

5 *The Bawariya*

The Bawariya is divided up into a number of exogamous sections called *gotras*, of the usual kind · the best known are the Turai and Pachhada, and Gola and Khagi, which as pairs are endogamous There is a vague rule of prohibited kin to the effect that blood relations (*dudh ke natedar*)[1] may not marry They admit strangers of other castes, but the newcomers do not as a rule get full caste privileges at once The marriage rules are very lax, it is said that wives rarely live with their husbands, though the official husband is always responsible for the children. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted divorcées can remarry by the *karao* form Their headmen are hereditary and are known by the name *hauliya*, they receive Re 1 per head a year as fees They have a dialect of their own which may, however, only be the dialect of their home (Bagri or Punjabi) Its most striking peculiarity is the use of 'h' or 'kh' for 's' e g *hat* (*sat*—seven), *daukh* (*das*—ten), *khakhra* (*susra*—father-in-law), *manukh* (*manush*—man) The same use of *kh* reappears in a Kanjar dialect But this dialect seems to be merely one that is unusual in the United Provinces and so not intelligible

6 *The Beriya*

The Beriya has a long list of subcastes which are of the usual kind, but, owing to the peculiar marriage customs of this tribe, are quite unimportant Regular marriages seldom occur amongst them because nearly all the girls are reserved for prostitution, and the men take concubines from other castes Indeed in Farrukhabad, to marry a girl of the tribe involves outcasting, to marry a prostituted girl involves a fine Connexions with women of menial castes are forbidden and involve expulsion There is said, however, to be a tendency towards regular marriage, when they do marry the wife can be put away for infidelity Union with a family with which there has been a former alliance is forbidden, the levirate and widow marriage are

[1] Literally, 'milk' relations

both permitted They have a strong tribal council and in Bengal at all events hereditary headmen (*sardar*) The councils are usually held once a year at Nohkhera in the rainy season

7 *The Habura* The Habura is said to have a set of exogamous septs of the usual kind but it is doubtful how far the fact has any effect on their marriage customs The rules of exogamy seem to be (1) to avoid the blood relation (*dudh bachake*) and (2) to marry outside the camp or gang Adultery is severely punished but pre nuptial immorality is lightly regarded Widows and divorcées may be re-married by the married rite (*karao*) They have a very strong tribal council under a president (*sardar*) which manages all tribal affairs the punishment for adultery in Aligarh involves outcasting The Habura has a regular thieves Latin which however is less like corrupt Hindi than usual

8 *The Kanjar* The Kanjar has two endogamous subcastes, the Kunch band and the Jallad in Aligarh in Bijnor there are also two the true and the Adhela Kanjars who are of mixed descent whilst in Agra also there are various endogamous groups There are also a number of exogamous sections, together with a vague rule which prohibits marriage between near cog nates Adult marriage seems to be usual though in some districts they have the custom of *pet manganiya* (womb betrothal) by which two fathers betroth to each other their unborn children conditionally on their proving of opposite sexes Widow marriage and the levirate are both permitted There is a tribal council but it does not appear to be of a permanent character it tries the usual offences and also cases where a clansman has been robbed or assaulted by another clansman Women accused of immorality are subjected to an ordeal which consists in holding a hot iron weeding spud in her hand if the skin is not burnt she is acquitted

In 1911 the census returns disclosed 119 speakers of a gipsy dialect called Kunchbandhi Specimens of this dia-lect were collected by Mr W Kirkpatrick amongst the

Kunchbandhiya Kanjars in the neighbourhood of Delhi, where they come in contact with Europeans as *shikaris* to the Delhi Tent Club. It is an argot based on ordinary Hindustani; the following are specimen words and phrases:

Bread	*dhimri*
Caste	*jetheli*
Child	*chookha*
Burial	*khimti dubaigo*
Gold mohar	*khasarf*
Man	*khad*
Woman	*loobhar*
Rupees	*rika*
Tobacco	*romak*
He has gone away	*rardes gaogiro*
I know	*jando*
There it goes	*woh jaogda*
Hide	*jugjao*
Snake	*sanpilo*
Well	*dhoan*
Water	*nimani*
Father	*bapilo*
Mother	*cha, antari*
Ox	*rail*
Moon	*chianda*
Sky	*radul*
Storm	*kandhi*
Awake	*jagog*
Dog	*jhukal*
Thief	*khainch*

The Hindustani basis for many of these words is clear. *Jetheli* (caste) obviously refers to *jeth*, a term of relationship. *Khimti* is *matti*, altered by preposing *kh*; words similarly altered are *khad* (*admi*), *khasarf* (*ashrafi*), *kandhi* (*andhi*). Other alterations of ordinary Hindustani words are *chooka* (*chokra*), *rika* (*sikka*), *romak* (*tambaku*), *rardes* (*pardes*), *dhoan* (*kuan*), *nimani* (*pani*), *bapilo* (*bap*), *cha* (*ma*), *antari* (*matari*), *rail* (*bail*), *sanpilo* (*sanp*), *chianda* (*chand*), *radul* (*badul*). The similarity of the verbal

roots is also apparent—*jagog* is connected with *jagna*, *jando* with *janna* *jaogda* and *gaogiro* with *jana* (*gaya*) *khainch* may also be connected with *khinchna* to snatch There are three words which resemble Romany—*jhukal* (dog—Romany *jhukel*) *mail* (horse—Romany *meila* a donkey) *loobhar* (woman—Romany *lubni* a wench or hussy)

9 *The Karwal* The Karwals themselves say that they are Kols who now despise them because they have given up nomadic habits They intermarry with Beriyas but are distinct from them because they do not prostitute their women The people call them Haburas which name, however is used loosely for any criminal tribe much as Kanjar is for any non-criminal vagrant tribe They are vagrants under police supervision They have lax marriage rules, for a man may take a wife of his own gang or from another gang or from among the Beriyas or (on payment of a fine of Rs 7) from any caste save the Chamar Bhangi Dhobi Dom Kori and Dhanuk Marriages need the sanction of the tribal council and a fee of Rs 4 is charged there is no ceremony save the *dudhabhati* Widow marriage is permitted the fee is Rs 30 or Rs 60 if the widow is a virgin The levirate is also permitted and a man may marry his younger brother s widow on payment of Rs 24 as a fee A Karwal can buy a wedded wife from her husband on payment of Rs 24 to the council and Rs 60 to the husband, plus the expenses of the original wedding Divorce is allowed for adultery The rape of a widow involves a fine of no less than Rs 150—indeed one of the many curiosities of this caste is its system of fines which all go to the council In addition to those mentioned above, the headman or headwoman—criminal gangs frequently have female *mukhias* thanks to the absence of the men in jail—charges a fee of Re 1-4 for naming a child The tribal council appears to be extremely powerful Karwals worship Jahar (Zahir) Pir Madar Sahib the Panchpir and Ghazi Mian occasionally also Kali and the Ganges They

[1] Ceremonial eating together of bride and bridegroom—a sort of *confarreati* The meal consists of milk and rice hence the name

have the Kanjar's and Sansiya's ordeal by fire, and a curious ordeal by water, in which the accused has to keep his head under water whilst a man runs 200 paces, if he can do so without taking breath he is adjudged innocent. A form of oath is cutting at the roots of the *pipal* tree This oath, which is found amongst Haburas, the ordeal by fire, found also amongst Sansiyas, the worship of Zahir Pir, also worshipped by Haburas, and of Madar Sahib, also worshipped by Beriyas, together with the right of intermarrying with Beriyas, clearly connects this tribe with the Beriya-Habura-Sansiya group of tribes [1]

10 The Nat

There are both Hindus and Muhammadan Nats, and the customs and ceremonies of the various sections differ accordingly The remarriage of widows and divorcées is permitted, immorality, even infidelity, is lightly regarded, being condoned by a fine In certain sections such as the Kabutari and Kalabaz, whose women are prostituted, the girl is allowed to choose between marriage and the life of a prostitute If they marry, they are carefully looked after The tribal council exists in all sub-sections and has the usual powers The deities worshipped naturally vary considorably As regards their occupation, all that is necessary has already been said above

11 The Qalandar

The Qalandar is a Muhammadan, nominally a faqir, following the rules of the Sunni sect They have three exogamous sections, Khokhar, Ghorawal and Chindi, but the third is now said to be outcasted because they affiliated a Khokhar There is a joint *panchayat,* with a permanent hereditary *sarpanch*, the council meets twice a year at Nawabganj near Cawnpore, or in Bahraich The caste is thoroughly criminal, they punish their convicts by making them feast the brotherhood on their release from jail, but as they only

[1] For other curious customs of this caste at birth and death, see Chapter XI Their women are midwives and pride themselves on their obstetric skill, even pretending ability to perform successfully such operations as craniotomy and cæsarian section The account of these people in the *Census Report* of 1911 was based on information supplied by Mr St J Farnon of the Opium Department who interviewed a gang of them in their own camp

impose this penalty on convicted Qalandars it may be deduced that the culprit is punished not for the theft but for being found out They have an argot of their own

12 The Sansiya

This degraded tribe appears to be divided into two endogamous and a number of exogamous sections The endogamous sections are the *khare* or pure and the *malla* or half-breed existence of the latter section is due to their custom of kidnapping women It is a curious fact that they act as bards or genealogists to certain Jat and Chauhan Rajput clans They have the usual rule of sectional exogamy reinforced by a prohibition of marriage between cousins to the third generation there is also a feeling in favour of selecting a bride from another camp The marriage ceremonial is reminiscent of marriage by capture Widow marriage and the levirate are both permitted Men outnumber women and the bride price consequently runs high The tribe has an argot of its own as criminals they are second to none

13. The Sanaurhiya

The Sanaurhiya claims to be of Brahmanical descent and tells various tales to support a contention which is utterly unfounded It is said that at first the laws of endogamy were strictly enforced if so they have since been relaxed and at the present time quite fifty per cent of the tribe are outsiders admitted to this criminal confederacy as children—probably kidnapped in many cases There are numerous subdivisions, nominally endogamous but the marriage laws are very lax They appear to have no occupation save theft, and have strict rules on the subject They may not use violence or rob after dark by the light of the moon or within a hundred miles of their home Gangs remain absent for as long as two or three years They have an argot of their own

14 Other criminal tribes

The Badhik, Bengali and Bhantu in all respects closely resemble the Barwar and Habura and nothing more need be said of them Nor need anything be said of the Dom of whom indeed only a minor part are vagrants. A

few words may, however, be said about other similar castes

(i) The Audhiya is on a level with other low caste Hindus in matters of custom. They are dangerous criminals, whose special 'lay' is counterfeit coin and jewellery

(ii) The Banjara caste has several branches Their original occupation was the carriage of grain and the sale of cattle, and they acted as commissariat to armies in the field The Turkiya, Baid, and Bahrup subcastes are still grain carriers, the Baids are also doctors and weavers, whilst the Labana trade in salt, the Mukeri and Naik in grain, and all of them in cattle They used to be criminals, specially addicted to cattle theft and kidnapping, as are those of them who turn to crime at the present day But the majority are now honest, and occasionally wealthy

(iii) The Dalera is a low Hindu caste of petty thieves, operating specially at fairs and bathing places and in bazaars

(iv) The Gandhila is a vagrant beggar, bird-catcher, and procurer

(v) The Gidhiya is a Bawariya offshoot that has settled down to an agricultural life in Rohilkhand

(vi) The Bhatra or Ramaiya is ostensibly a peddler, actually a swindler, by turns astrologer, palmist, quack, and confidence trickster

(vii) The Jogi Pathans are wandering Pathan beggars, strictly orthodox Muhammadans, usually fairly literate, who live by swindling and cheating, pretending to be long-lost relations, and transmuting base metal into gold or silver are their favourite frauds Some of them, however, are honest and respectable agriculturists

(viii) The Rinds are a small tribe of Muhammadan beggars, quack doctors and teachers of the Quran, who are given to petty theft of every kind

(ix) The Kanmail (ear-cleaner) is an offshoot from the Mahawat Nat They are settled in Moradabad and are Muhammadans

At the census of 1911, it was noticed that many persons who obviously belonged to one or other of the vagrant tribes returned themselves by unusual names These were all occupational—Kunchbandhiya, Rachbandhiya Singiwala Gidhiya Kanmail and Kanghigar were the most common all are subcastes of Kanjar, Bawariya or Nat As we have seen above the Gidhiya and Kanmail have both settled down permanently and given up vagrancy There is a certain amount of evidence that the Kanghigars (who are combmakers) have also settled down as there is a colony of them at Kalinjar in Banda whilst the evidence of Mr Kirkpatrick shows that many Kunchbandhiya Kanjars must be permanent residents of the neighbourhood of Delhi In Rohilkhand too certain Gual Nats have given up vagrancy and taken to trade and adopted the style and designation of Badi Banjaras These new developments may point to a tendency to give up vagrant habits and take to honest livelihoods The evidence at present is insufficient to warrant a definite pronouncement, but so far as it goes it appears to point in this direction

15. Changes among the gipsy tribes

During the last decade the Bhantus under the leadership of one Sultana developed into a fraternity of dangerous dacoits and Government was compelled to create a special dacoity force to deal with them After prolonged guerilla warfare this force under Mr F Young C I E of the Indian Police succeeded in destroying or arresting the Bhantu gangs Most of those who were not hanged have now been removed with their own consent as settlers to the Andaman Islands

16 The Bhant

Principal authorities.—Hollins, *Criminal Tribes of the U P* (1914). Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N.-W P and Oudh* (1896). *Census Report U P* 1911

CHAPTER X

CASTE AND ISLAM

From the dawn of history India has been repeatedly invaded, sometimes by kings in search of new dominions, sometimes by foreign tribes in search of new homes Persians, Greeks, and Bactrians, Aryas, Sakas, Kushans, and Huns, each in turn carved out for themselves kingdoms in India Some left little mark either on the country or on its inhabitants, others were ultimately absorbed into the Hindu race and the Hindu polity

1 Invasions of India

In the seventh century after Christ, the new militant religion of Muhammad arose in Arabia, which, in the fullness of time, set in motion a fresh series of invasions into India Some of these were mere raids in search of slaves and plunder, others were directed to the conquest of fresh territories, many resulted in the permanent settlement of numerous foreigners They introduced new races, a new civilization, and a new religion into India, and consequently produced important changes, both in the composition of the Indian people, and in their social system Though it is unnecessary to relate the story of successive kings and successive conquests, so much of a historical account is required as will show how these changes arose

2 Islam

From a very early date, the Arabs had turned covetous eyes on India As early as 650 A D their ships were raiding the coasts of Bombay and Sind Fourteen years later, an Arab army, advancing from Merv, took Kabul, and detached a force to explore the Indus valley, which sacked Multan, and then returned with much booty and many prisoners In 711 A D, Muhammad ibn Kasim, nephew of the Governor of Basra, led an Arab army into

3 Early Muslim invasions

Sind and within three years was master of the country from the sea to Multan Tradition holds that the Sumera Rajputs drove the invaders out in 750 A D and that the latter took refuge in Afghanistan But this is incorrect There is contemporary evidence to show that a Qureshi Arab was reigning as Amir of Multan in 915 and that the kingdom had been hereditary in his family nearly from the beginning of Islam Another Arab dynasty was formed in a new town called Mansura in Lower Sind Other evidence shows that the same situation existed in 976 and in 985 In 1006 the Multan ruler allied himself with the Hindu Raja of Lahore against Mahmud of Ghazni It is clear therefore, that this Arab settlement did not come to an end as usually alleged but its hold on the country was probably feeble, there were few converts to Islam and in course of time all effects of the sole Arab settlement in northern India disappeared

4 Islam in Persia and Central Asia

After the Sind adventure India was free from Muhammadan aggression for some three centuries But during that period events were taking place in neighbouring countries that profoundly affected the nature of the later invasions By 650 the Arab forces had conquered Persia as far as the Oxus by 714 they had advanced the boundary of their empire to the Aral Sea and the Jaxartes (Syr Daria) In 820 the Arab empire began to break up and in the process there came into existence on the north-western borders of India an independent Muslim kingdom consisting of Khorasan, Khwarizm Transoxiana and the greater part of modern Afghanistan with its capital at Bokhara The earlier

Rose *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N W.F P* (1911), Vol. I p. 489. Lane-Poole *Mediaeval India under Mohammedan Rule* (1907) p. 2

[2] Khorasan was a large Persian province. Khwarizm corresponds roughly to the Trans-Caspian territories (Khiva and Merv). Transoxiana is that part of Turkestan between the Oxus and the Jaxartes. The parts of Afghanistan that formed part of this kingdom were Kandahar Kabul and Zabulistan i.e. the tracts round Ghazni Rose, op. cit., Vol. I p. 40.

rulers were Arabs or Persians In 961, Alptagin, a Turki slave of the royal Samani family, who had risen to be Governor of Khorasan, becoming involved in a dynastic intrigue, fled for refuge to Ghazni. There he set up a small independent kingdom in the Afghan country, but the next Ghaznavide king but one, the famous Sultan Mahmud, reconquered the kingdom of Bokhara from which Alptagin had fled The population was mainly Persian and Afghan, in Transoxiana there were also many nomad tribes of the Turki branch of the great Tartar race All subsequent Muhammadan invasions of India came from the north-west, and this fact explains the prominence of Persian, Afghan, and Tartar blood among the Muslims of India to-day

5 *The dynasty of Ghazni*

(i) *Sabaktagin* Sabaktagin, successor of Alptagin, was the first to come into conflict with an Indian power In 977, Jaipal, Raja of Lahore, harassed by constant raids from the Afghan hills, led an army to attack Ghazni He was forced to come to terms, but on returning to his own country declined to carry out his promises, and drew together a large army with the assistance of his allies at Delhi, Ajmer, Kalinjar, and Kanauj Sabaktagin, however, defeated him, took possession of the country up to the Indus, and left a garrison and governor in Peshawar

6 *Sultan Mahmud*

(ii) *Sultan Mahmud*, the greatest king of his time, was also the first great Muslim invader of India During his reign of 33 years (997-1030) he made numerous[1] expeditions into that country, in the course of which he annexed the western Punjab to his dominions, and led raids as far as Kanauj in the east and Gujarat in the south But outside the Punjab his ventures were those of a piratical knight-errant rather than a conqueror, his object was to destroy and plunder temples,[2] not to acquire territory

[1] Some authorities say twelve, some sixteen or seventeen
[2] Notably Nagarkot, Thanesar, and Somnath

6. Later Ghaznavid kings

Under Sultan Mahmud's successors,[1] the Seljuks, a Tartar tribe, broke into Transoxiana and gradually overran and conquered their kingdom and by the beginning of the twelfth century the Ghaznavide dominions consisted of little more than parts of Afghanistan and the Indian provinces, whilst the court was frequently in residence at Lahore From the ethnological point of view the change was of the utmost importance since it must have caused Muslims to take up their permanent residence in India It must have been at this time that by constant intercourse with the Hindus the rudiments of the present Hindustani language were formed and the national character of Indian Muslims was moulded

8 The House of Ghor

The country of Ghor in the mountains east of Herat was inhabited by Afghans who had been conquered by the Arabs and converted as early as 830 A D From the middle of the eleventh century it had become a dependency of Ghazni but in 1152 in revenge for a despicable act of treachery the King of Ghor seized and destroyed Ghazni The earlier Ghori kings succeeded in reconquering a considerable part of the former possessions of the Ghaznavide kingdom thus reopening the road from Persia and Transoxiana into India whilst the fourth of them Shahab-ud-din between the years 1176 and his death in 1206 had conquered practically the whole of northern India from the delta of the Indus to the delta of the Ganges

There were twelve of these, who reigned 56 years between them. The dynasty came to an end in 86.

The term is used in a loose sense an inhabitant of Afghanistan There has been much discussion reg rding the ethnology of Ghor Older writers say that its people were Afghans f the tribe of Sur Some say they were Turks. Later authorities make them T jiks, or Persian settlers in Afghanistan of Iranian or Arab descent. See Elphinstone, *History / India*, 2nd edition, Vol. I p. 599; Rose op. cit., s.v 'Tajik. The kings themselves were almost certainly T jiks.

[3] Also called Muhammad Ghori, Muhammad-bin-Sam and Muiz-ud-din.

9 *Sultans of Delhi*

Shahab-ud-din's conquests were not all effected by himself, but by his generals One of these, Kutb-ud-din Aibak, was viceroy of the Indian provinces under Shahab-ud-din, and on the latter's death proclaimed his independence His successor, Shams-ud-din Altamsh, sought and obtained investiture from the Khalif of Baghdad in 1229, and from that year India became a separate Muhammadan kingdom All succeeding dynasties,[1] however, were none the less of foreign extraction—Turks, Arabs, and Afghans, but, save for recurring irruptions of the Moghuls (who were not, however, converted to Islam till a much later date), there were no further foreign invasions till 1526 It is unnecessary to relate in detail the doings of these Delhi kings, a general account will suffice

10 *Political effects of the earlier Muslim invasions*

At no time was Islam universally triumphant throughout India The principal obstacle to Muslim success was the organization of the Rajput class The Rajputs were formed into clans, the members of which were bound to their chief and to each other by many ties The chiefs of these clans stood in the same relation to the king as their own retainers did to them, and so the king, nobility, and soldiery all formed a single united body Further, there was sufficient coherence between neighbouring Rajput kingdoms to draw them together against an invader Thus Lahore, Ajmer, Kalinjar and Kanauj united against Sabaktagin, and at a later date the Tomars of Delhi, the Chauhans of Ajmer, and the Gaharwars of Kanauj united against Sultan Mahmud[2] But even when such an alliance had been defeated, the separate states must still be vanquished in

[1] Other dynasties were as follows (1) Slave kings (Turki), so called because the earliest were slaves of the Ghori kings, 1206-1290 (2) House of Khilji (a Turki tribe long settled in Afghanistan), 1290-1320 (3) House of Tughlaq (Punjabi Turks), 1320-1414 (4) Saiyids (Arabs settled in India), 1414-1450 (5) Lodis (Afghans), 1450-1526

[2] It is usually stated that the ruling dynasty in Kanauj was the Rathors, but this is wrong See V A Smith, *Early History of India*, 4th edition (1924), p 399, note 5

detail so that conquest was a protracted and tedious business whilst each state remained a focus for revolt And such revolts were frequent A ruler that submitted was usually permitted to remain in possession of his dominions so that at all times a considerable part of the Muslim empire was semi independent Such princes would remain submissive under a strong ruler under weak rulers they rebelled until another strong ruler succeeded to subdue them Though the usual punishment for rebellion was indiscriminate slaughter and slavery yet the Hindu spirit was never broken Muslim supremacy was challenged again and again notably in the times of Balban and Muhammad Tughlaq and often with success Finally after Tamerlane's invasion in 1398 the Saiyid kings authority ran only within a few miles of Delhi and the rest of India was independent

11 Rajput migrations

These constant revolts had two important results The first was a series of Rajput migrations which were themselves to some extent the result of the Rajput feudal system Though Rajputs are anything but nomadic, yet when compelled by circumstances to leave their home they have often moved in a body like a Tartar horde, to find fresh homes elsewhere Thus we find Janwars Dikhits Chauhans, Raikwars Bais Chandels Gaharwars all moving eastward during the 13th century to escape the Muslim invaders, and in the process coming into conflict with Bhars, Pasis, Arakhs, Kols, and other Dravidian races who had ruled the land for many years and whom the Rajputs had to dispossess before they could settle down in their present habitations

12 Muhammadan settlement

As has been explained above Balban was one of the kings in whose time Hindu rebellion was most widespread and most serious He suppressed successive revolts with the utmost severity but to prevent their recurrence he also adopted the system of

Crooke *N W Provinces of India* (1897), p 86.

building forts and blockhouses all over the country, especially along the roads, which he garrisoned with Afghan troops. Most of the Muhammadan colonies, which were planted on the Roman system to keep the Hindu population in subjection, also date from this period Such were the Muslim colonies at Jarwal in Bahraich, at Birhar in Fyzabad, at Bilgram, Gopamau, and Mallanwan, all in Hardoi. There were of course also many considerable towns under Muslim governors, such as Saharanpur, Farrukhabad, and Ghazipur, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, and other towns in Rohilkhand, Bahraich and Fyzabad in Oudh; and Banda in Bundelkhand But the chiefs and governors in charge of these settlements often proved as troublesome and as rebellious as the Hindus whom they were supposed to watch At first, they were mainly Turks, but under Muhammad Tughlaq Turks were replaced by foreign adventurers of all races—Persians, Afghans, Khorasanis, and Moghuls

13 Moghul irruptions

In 1221 occurred the first irruption of the Moghul hordes[1] into India, under the famous Changiz Khan. This irruption was 'the greatest calamity that has fallen on mankind since the deluge They had no religion to teach, no seeds of improvement to sow . . , their only object was to slaughter and destroy, and the only trace they left was in the devastation of every country which they visited '[2] They were, in short, the merest savages, similar to, possibly more savage than, their predecessors and kinsmen, the Huns On this occasion they did relatively little damage, for their advance was stopped by the Indus, and they turned aside into Iraq But though by 1240 A D they were masters of the greater part of western and central Asia, India offered

[1] The term Moghul is generally used of these invaders, but it is not always correct For instance, Timur himself and most of his troops were Turks, whilst the invasion of 1245 into N-E India (if it occurred at all), was probably of Manchus Turk, Moghul or Mongol, and Manchu are all branches of the same stock, and the first two, at all events, are often confused

[2] Elphinstone, op cit, Vol II, p 5

an irresistible attraction and the Moghul invasions during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries numbered sixteen [1] Their object was not conquest but plunder they caused endless loss of life endless destruction of property and untold misery But even the Amir Timur (Tamerlane) who took and sacked Delhi in 1398 made no attempt to settle in India He retreated leaving no trace of his passage save ruined cities But he had crushed the Delhi kingdom The Saiyid kings (1414 1450) ruled Delhi itself and the immediate neighbourhood The Lodis (1450-1526) managed to regain a portion of their predecessors domains but the rest of India was ruled by Hindu princes and Muslim governors who were practically independent

14 The Moghul Empire

In 1526 Babar King of Kabul and fifth in descent from Tamerlane, entered India took Delhi and dispossessed Ibrahim the last Lodi king By his death in 1530 he had defeated a Rajput confederacy led by the Rana of Chithor and extended his power as far as Multan and the borders of Bihar Humayun his son was deprived of Kabul and the western Punjab which passed to his brother and rival Kamran; whilst in the east he had to face the powerful Afghan kingdom of Bengal under Sher Shah He was forced by that king to fly for his life into Persia and for some fourteen years was an exile during which time however he succeeded in regaining the Kabul kingdom He ultimately defeated the Bengal Afghans at Panipat in 1556 Dying the same year he was succeeded by Akbar, who in a long reign of 49 years restored the Muslim dominions from Kandahar and Kabul across all India north of the Vindhyas, as far east as Orissa and as far west as Sind Jahangir (1605 1628) added little to his father s kingdom but Shah Jahan (16 8-1658) extended his

[1] 122 139; 245 (two invasions, one from Tibet into N E. India) 1253 1279 1292; 295 296; 297 1303; 304 (two invasions); 305; 13 5 1398 The facts and dates come from Elphinstone, op cit

boundaries into the Deccan, whilst Aurangzeb (1658-1707), conquered Golconda and Bijapur in the south, and as far as Assam in the east Under this emperor, the Moghul empire reached its widest limits, but its decay also began The Marathas became a powerful military nation, which Aurangzeb never subdued, whilst his internal policy was such as to alienate the loyalty of his Hindu subjects His six successors were all mere puppets under the control of various adventurers The empire once again broke up into independent kingdoms The Rajputana princes regained their freedom, the Sikhs revolted, the Marathas overran southern India, seized Malwa and Orissa, and levied blackmail on Bengal Finally, the Moghul empire virtually came to an end, when Shah Alam II entered the British camp after the battle of Buxar in 1764, and became a pensioner of the East India Company

15 Afghan invasions

During the first quarter of the 18th century, the Ghilzais, an Afghan tribe, had overrun Persia They were defeated and driven forth by Nadir Shah, a Persian adventurer, who then conquered Afghanistan and led a host of Persians and Afghans into India, took Delhi, and, after a sack that lasted 58 days, retired with an enormous booty He was succeeded by Ahmad Shah Abdali, who, having made himself master of Afghanistan, changed the name of his tribe to Durani On six occasions he invaded India, pillaged and slaughtered in city and countryside alike, and then retired to his mountains Finally, he met the Maratha forces at Panipat in 1761, and, though he defeated them, he retreated, never to enter India again

16 Muslim ethnology (a) The early Muslim invaders

As has already been stated, the kings of the House of Ghazni were Turks by extraction, though probably their blood was mixed by intermarriage, Sultan Mahmud's mother, for instance, was a Persian During his reign, the civil administration was entirely in the hands of Persians, Persian was the language of the court and of literature, though Arabic

was used for certain important documents and, no doubt, in religion Lawyers, teachers and divines were generally Arabs or of Arab descent The army was recruited from all parts of the kingdom they were principally Turks and Afghans but contingents of Arabs, Tajiks Khiljis, and even Hindus, are all mentioned Only the Hindus and possibly some of the Turki soldiery, were not Muslims Such was the composition of the Muhammadan court and army in Mahmud s time such it remained when under the later Ghaznavides, court and army migrated to India The influx of foreigners continued under the Ghori and Delhi kings for they continued to recruit their Muslim troops from the tribes across the Indus to which by descent they themselves belonged

(b) Moghul settlements

Though the Moghul hordes invariably retired, contingents remained behind to take service in the Muhammadan armies As early as 1286 we hear of a massacre of Moghul mercenaries in the course of a political intrigue In 1292 after a defeat 3,000 Moghuls were converted, joined the army and were assigned a suburb of Delhi for their residence which is still called Moghulpura In 1297 these men or others like them, mutinied and joined a rebel Hindu raja, being put to death when the raja was defeated They were in fact the cause of constant trouble so much so that in 1311 the King (Ala-ud-din Khilji) as a result of a plot to assassinate him in which some of them were implicated caused the whole number some 15 000 to be put to death and their families to be sold as slaves It would seem however that at a later date they were again enlisted in the army for two other mutinies in which they took part occurred in 1347 and 1351 whilst the chiefs of these converted Moghuls were men of some position being known as *amir jadida* (new nobility) In fact there can be little doubt that long before Babar conquered Delhi in 1526 numerous Moghuls had taken up their residence in the country thus adding one more racial element to the already diversified Muslim population

Timur, ancestor of the Moghul emperors, was not himself a Moghul, but a Turk, of the *18 (c) The Timurid Dynasty* Chagatai branch Babar, fifth in descent from Timur, was half Turk, half Moghul, being descended on his mother's side from Chagatai Khan, son of Changiz Khan, from whom the Chagatai Turks took their name, as inhabitants of the tracts in Transoxiana which had formed part of his heritage But whatever Babar was by descent, in all other respects he was an educated Persian gentleman, indeed, he both loathed and despised the Moghuls [1] Of his successors, Humayun's mother was a Persian lady of Herat, whilst Akbar's was a Syudani of Khorasan The mothers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan were both Rajput princesses—indeed, the last mentioned king and his successor had far more Rajput than Moghul blood in their veins

Babar, when he invaded India, was a king of much the same estate as Mahmud of Ghazni, *19 (d) The Moghul army* both ruled small realms in the Afghan hills And Babar's army was similar to that of Mahmud's, being composed of Turks, Moghuls, Afghans, Tajiks and Persians In Humayun's time, however, the loss of Kabul closed the Afghan and Central Asian recruiting fields to the Moghul emperors, until Akbar, in the latter half of his reign, succeeded in reconquering Kabul and Kandahar From that time onwards till the reign of Aurangzeb, fresh immigrants from Central Asia constantly entered India, and we read of Afghan, Persian, Moghul and Uzbeg contingents in the Delhi armies, as well as Saiyids, Shaikhs, Rajputs, and (among the infantry) other Indian races of lower



[1] As is shown by the following epigram, written by Babar himself

'Were the Mongols a race of angels, it would still be a vile nation,
Were their name written in gold, it would still be abomination
Beware you pluck not a single ear from a Mongol field,
For whatever is sown with Mongol seed has an odious yield '

Lane-Poole, *Babar*, p 58

status both Muslim and Hindu The Uzbegs were a Turki clan that had risen to prominence at the end of the 15th century in Transoxiana there was a large contingent of them at the battle of Samugarh in 1658 [1]

10 *The Moghul court*

The Moghul court under Akbar and his two successors was heterogeneous to a degree High positions were held by Persians such as Faizi and Abul Fazl by Rajputs, such as Man Singh and Bhagwan Das by other Hindus such as Birbal and Todar Mal by converted Hindus such as Sadullah and by Uzbegs such as Abdullah Khan and Khanzaman Akbar in the course of his religious investigations, also made friends of divines of every conceivable sect—Muslims, Hindus, Jains Parsis and Jesuits from Goa whilst there were also numerous foreigners—English Dutch Portuguese, French and Armenian—at his court or that of his successors [2]

11 *General relations between Hindus and Muslims before the Moghul Empire*

Until the later Tughlaq period Islam in India remained on the whole, an isolated community observing strictly their rules of religious and social law And this isolation was preserved by the constant stream of foreign immigrants who came to swell the Muslim armies During this period the general attitude of Muslim to Hindu was one of somewhat contemptuous but good natured tolerance From time to time either for reasons of policy or bigotry a sultan such as Ala ud-din or Muhammad Tughlaq might oppress them by heavy taxation or more direct methods whilst at all times Hindus were liable to

[1] According to Bernier the term Moghul in common parlance was used as a general term for foreigners whose complexions were white and who professed Islam, i.e. for all foreigners from Persia and Central Asia. Bernier *Travels* 2nd edition, revised by V A. Smith (1914), p. 3

[2] Some of the most prominent names of visitors to the court are as follows —Jains—Hiravijaya Suri Vijayasena Suri Bhanuchandra Upadhyaya; Parsis—Dastur Meherji Rana; Jesuits—Ridolfo Aquaviva, Antonio Monserrate, Jerome Xavier Emmanuel Pinheiro and Francisco Corsi English—Captain William Hawkins, John Mildenhall Tom Coryat, and Sir Thomas Roe with his chaplain the Rev Edward Terry Frenchmen—Bernier and Tavernier

name of the third dynasty shows to what heights a slave could rise. Many Hindu slaves thus became governors or generals or wazirs. But the system had its drawbacks. In 1387, for instance, there was a formidable rebellion of the slaves in Delhi; whilst there is no doubt that the influence of converted or nominally converted Hindu slaves in the court of the later Tughlaq kings had much to do with the Hindu rebellions of that period. And when in 1561 Akbar prohibited the enslaving of prisoners taken in war, he removed a source of constant danger to the peace of his empire.

3 Conversion

Secondly, the slave system had a considerable influence on the composition of the Muslim population both by means of conversion and of intermarriage. The custom of the original Arab Muslims was to offer a foe that had submitted the choice of conversion or the payment of tribute; a foe that had resisted was slain or enslaved. It is on record that Muhammad ibn Kasim actually dealt with the Hindus in Sind in this manner. Later conquerors, however, seem to have been as a rule less fanatical. It is said that Sultan Mahmud never attempted to make unwilling converts; though he broke the idols he spared the idolators. Shahab-ud-din Ghori, on the other hand, did try to force Islam on the Hindus. "Those who were wise and acute were converted to Islam, but those who stood by their ancient faith were slain by the sword."[1] This statement was made of the capture of Koil, but was doubtless true of other towns. But there is nothing to show that his successors followed his example, and since there were few bigots amongst them, we may reasonably conclude that forced conversion was unusual or even unknown. The following quotation, which relates to the capture of Kalinjar, probably represents what usually happened:— "The temples were converted into mosques and abodes of goodness, and the ejaculations of the bead counters and the voices of the summoners to prayer ascended to the highest heaven, and the very name of

[1] Quoted in Crooke, *N W Provinces of India* (1897) p. 84.

of Hindu slaves in the harems and where the union was more than mere concubinage must usually have been preceded by conversion

5 Relations of the Moghul Emperors to Hinduism

As has already been explained above, the recruiting grounds of Central Asia were for many years closed to Akbar This was undoubtedly one of the reasons which dictated his policy of toleration towards Hindus As early as 1562 he married the daughter of Raja Bihar Mal of Jaipur the mother of Jahangir At the same time he conferred high office on Man Singh a relation of the Raja Shortly afterwards he abolished the pilgrim taxes and the *jaziya* or capitation tax on Hindus, throughout his dominion It was about the same time that he prohibited the ancient custom of making slaves of prisoners taken in war a reform which though not limited to any one class, was in practice mainly beneficial to Hindus At a still later date after he had invented his own religion he passed other enactments, all of which had the effect of giving Hindus and other infidels the right to worship or build temples, as they pleased These measures reconciled the Hindus to his rule whilst the Rajputs became his staunch supporters His army was very largely recruited from their ranks and they fought bravely for him in all his wars His two successors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan continued his policy Aurangzeb, however, a fanatical puritan reversed it He reimposed most of the Hindu disabilities including the special taxation, which Akbar had abolished with the result that discontent and disaffection spread amongst the Hindus The Rajputs were alienated once and for all whereas they had been under Akbar and his two successors, the principal prop of the monarchy they were from this time forward frequently at war with the Moghul emperors and, even when they were at peace, seldom furnished them with troops or assisted them in any way Aurangzeb in short in his fanaticism undid all that Akbar had done to weld the two races into one and the results of his policy persist to the present day

Turkman is little more than a generic term for an inhabitant of Central Asia who is of Tartar descent Finally Qizilbash[1] are supposed to be a tribe of Tartar horsemen from the Eastern Caucasus, who formed the best troops in the Persian armies, and of the force with which Nadir Shah conquered Delhi In fact, it would seem that the name Moghul must be regarded as used in the wide sense which according to Bernier was prevalent in the 17th century in India—namely any foreigner who professed Islam and had a fair complexion such as Persians, Turks, Arabs, and Uzbegs or their descendants

28 *Pathan*

The word Pathan is a Hindi corruption of a Persian word Pakhtana or Pashtana, which means speakers of the Pashtu language It is popularly applied to all tribes whose present or original homes are on or near the north west boundaries of India A synonym is Afghan a Persian word of which the meaning is uncertain another is Rohilla or Ruhela which means highlander' Of these three Afghan is much the oldest term for Pathan is not found in literature till the 16th century, and Rohilla till the 18th Both Afghan and Rohilla are now used with restricted meanings Afghan is a polite designation in favour with educated persons, or those who are proud of their descent Rohilla is either a generic term for the Pathan inhabitants of the tract called Rohilkhand, or the name of a separate Pathan clan descended from the original Pathan settlers in that tract[2]

29 *Pathan ethnology*

Pathan or Afghan ethnology has formed the subject of many books,[3] and given rise to many theories Afghan tradition traces both name and descent to Afghana, grandson of King Saul of Israel, and relates that

[1] Red-heads from the red caps that they wore

[2] The clan if it really exists as a separate entity is of recent origin. The great majority of Rohilkhand Pathans can and do claim descent from older clans.

[3] Bellew *Races of Afghanistan*; Ibbetson, *Punjab Ethnology* Malleson *History of Afghanistan* Raverty Translation of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* Longworth-Dames, 'Afghanistan in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*—are only some of these.

the original tribes were transplanted from Syria by Nebuchadnezzar to various colonies in India and Persia, whence they escaped into the Ghor and Hazara country.[1] But these legends can safely be discarded, they are of literary origin, and date back no further than the end of the 16th century, being examples of the practice, common among Musalmans outside Arabia, of claiming descent from the Prophet or some personage in the sacred books The genealogies which depend upon these legends have indeed a certain evidential value, for in their earlier stages they inform us of the beliefs held three centuries ago of the relationship between the various tribes, and in their later stages they may be taken as historically accurate Further, they afford, after their own fashion, some proof of the only fact that can be regarded as certain in Afghan ethnology—namely that the Afghan race is extremely heterogeneous[2] For Afghanistan lies between three widely different races—Iranian, Indo-Aryan, and Tartar It has been included in the dominions of Persian, Greek, Bactrian, Indian, Arab, Turk, and Moghul rulers Through it passes have poured all the armies and hordes that have invaded

[1] It is on this legend, reinforced by various other arguments, that has been founded the famous but fantastic theory that the Afghans represent the ten lost tribes of Israel Unfortunately, it was not Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, but Sargon, King of Assyria, who led the ten tribes into captivity

[2] It is unnecessary to give the genealogy at length, but a brief description, dealing only with the tribes represented in the United Provinces, will be of interest Kais Abdul Rashid, lineal descendant of King Saul and ally of the Prophet, had three sons by the daughter of Khalid ibn Walid, a Qureshi Arab, and first apostle to the Afghans The eldest, Sarban, had two sons, Sharkhbun and Kharshbun From the former are descended Tarin, Durani, Barech, and Barakzai From the latter are descended Muhammadzai, Yusufzai, Khalil, Mohmand, and Daudzai The second son of Kais, by name Batan, had a daughter, Bibi Matto, who married Shah Husain Ghori, from whom descend Lodi and Ghilzai From the third son, Ghorgusht, descend Ghorgushti and Kakar Finally, Urmur, a son of Sharkhbun, adopted Karlani, from whom descend Dilazak, Orakzai, Afridi, Khatak, and Bangash Descent through a daughter clearly suggests mixed blood, adoption suggests affiliation of tribes of different blood It is possible, also, that the main stocks—Sharkhbuni, Kharshbuni, and Ghorgushti—represent different racial elements.

India In such circumstances, its population must necessarily be an amalgam of diverse racial elements And there is sufficient definite proof of this assertion For instance, as early as Sultan Mahmud and as late as Babar we hear of Iranian Tajiks in Afghanistan The present Peshawar district was at an early date, the home of an Indian tribe the Gandhari During the 11th and 12th centuries both Khilji Turks and Ghuzz Turkmans were settled there Khalil ibn Abdulla and his Arabs made a home there, when they left Kabul Finally Pashtu, the language of the country, is a mixture of Iranian Persian, and Hindi with Turkish and Arabic elements

30. Pathans i the United Provinces

Pathans are found all over the province, except in the hill districts they are most numerous in Rohilkhand, Oudh and Allahabad, all tracts of special importance in Muslim history Out of a total of over 700 000 more than half belong to four clans—Yusufzai Lodi, Ghori and Kakar

31 Principal Pathan tribes

(1) The *Yusufzai* are considered by Ibbetson to be descended from the old Indo-Aryan Gandharis There was a large contingent of them in Babar s army (1526) whilst they gave a great deal of trouble to Akbar, defeating one of his armies and killing his favourite Raja Birbal At a later date, they must have frequently taken service under the Moghul emperors, for they are now to be found in every district in the province

(2) The *Lodi* are descended from the traditional ancestor, Kais Abdul Rashid [1] only through the female side, which suggests that there is a large foreign, probably Tajik, element in the tribe They have given two important dynasties to India the Lodi kings of Delhi (1450-1526) and the Sur kings of Bengal (1540-1556) It is natural therefore that their numbers should be large; indeed during the period of their ascendancy, it seems probable that many entire families emigrated They are

[1] See note 2 on p. 179.

most numerous in the eastern districts, where the Sur kings reigned. A certain number of them are engaged in the carrying trade between Central Asia and Afghanistan, and India.[1]

(3) The *Ghoris'* descent is dubious According to tradition, they seem to be a mixture of Arab and Gandhari stock,[2] at all events, they were undoubtedly a hybrid race, and contained a large Tajik element The second Muslim dynasty belonged to this tribe; the numerous Ghoris that are found to-day all over the province are, without doubt, the descendants of the Ghori kings' followers, whether Tajiks, Turks or Afghans.

(4) *Kakar* The Kakar tribe belongs to a small group of tribes claiming descent from the traditional ancestor through his third son Ismail, nicknamed Ghorgusht. According to one theory, the tribe is of Scythian origin; according to another, Ghorgusht is only an altered form of Ghirghis, or Kirghiz, and points to a Tartar or Turki origin Of these theories, all that need be said is that, whilst Turk is less unlikely than Scythian, there is no proof of either The Kakars seem to have entered India mainly under the Sur dynasty of Bengal, which would explain why they are most numerous in the eastern districts

32 Other Pathan tribes

There are representatives of many other tribes in the province, which, though less numerous, are interesting They fall into four groups, as follows (1) the Ghilzai, akin to the Lodis; (2) the Mohmand and Muhammadzai, akin to the Yusufzai, (3) the Tarin, Durani, Barakzai, and Barech; (4) the Afridi, Bangash, Dilazak, Khatak, and Orakzai.

[1] Their interest in trade may be due to their Tajik blood At the present day, as in past centuries, the Tajik, whether in Afghanistan or Bokhara, freely engages in trade and industry

[2] Ghor is the traditional home of the 'pure' Afghan, who claims descent from King Saul History proves that it had a large Tajik population, there were many Tajiks in Shahab-ud-din's army Probably, therefore, the mixture is of Arab (or other Muslim invader) and Tajik, rather than Gandhari

(1) Th Ghilzai, like the Lodi, are descended from the traditional ancestor through the female side only They are usually but wrongly identified with the Khilji Turks But it seems probable that some of their sections are of Turki, whilst others may be of Tajik origin Large numbers of them accompanied Mahmud of Ghazni into India At a much later date many of them followed Nadir Shah Like the Lodi many of them are engaged in the carrying trade

(2) The Mohmand and Muhammadzai both seem to have been engaged in the Yusufzai revolt against Akbar in 1586 It is not clear when they came into India but, being most numerous in Rohilkhand, they were probably attracted thither when the Rohillas became powerful

(3) Tarin Durani Barakzai, and Barech belong to the most senior branch in the Afghan genealogy, and are the purest of pure Afghans The Durani was the tribe to which the last invader of India belonged Barech was the tribe of the famous Rohilla chief, Hafiz Rahmat Khan Otherwise, they are of little importance in India They are most common in Rohilkhand

(4) Afridi Bangash Dilazak, Khatak and Orakzai are closely connected in the Afghan genealogy as Karlani or adopted tribes This, of course suggests that they are of different blood to the rest of the tribes For instance the Afridi are usually identified with the Aparvtae of Herodotus If the identification is correct they are descended from mild peace loving and contemplative Indo-Aryan Buddhists, which scarcely seems a suitable ancestry for the Afridis The Bangash claim to be Qureshi Arabs, descended from Khalid ibn Walid the first apostle of Islam to the Afghans, whose daughter married Kais Abdul Rashid The Orakzai are certainly of very mixed extraction—according to their own account part Persian, part Hindu The Afridi and Bangash seem first to have entered India about the time of Akbar when they are found in the army The Bangash, under the later Moghul emperors, acquired considerable estates as Nawabs of Farrukhabad The Khataks were prominent from the time of Aurangzeb many followed

Ahmad Shah Durani into India It is not clear when the Orakzai and Dilazak entered India; the former probably accompanied the Bangash, whilst there is a story that the latter caused so much trouble in their attempts to recover territory that they had lost to the Yusufzai, that Jahangir deported them *en masse* to India

33 Saiyid and Shaikh

In this province, as in other parts of India, there are many families and tribes which claim to be of Arab stock Those of them which also claim descent from the Prophet through his daughter Fatima and Ali are called Saiyids, an Arabic title which means 'prince': the others are known as Shaikhs, another Arabic title meaning 'chief'. We have first to consider how these Arab immigrants found their way into India

34 The Arab ethnic element

The only Arab invasion of India was that which Muhammad ibn Kasim led into Sind in the 8th century, and, as has been said, its success was only partial, and its effects purely local On the other hand, by the end of the same century, Persia, Central Asia as far as the Jaxartes, and parts of Afghanistan were all included in the Arab empire, held by Arab troops, and overrun by Arab settlers Many of them were soldiers, we find, for instance, a large contingent of Arab cavalry in Sultan Mahmud's army It was they, too, who provided the king with his lawyers, divines, teachers, doctors, and statesmen These Arab settlers, of course, intermarried with the natives of the various countries in which they had made their homes for there was nothing in the law of Islam to prevent such unions, at all events if conversion had preceded the union, whilst there is definite evidence to show that they did occur at a later date When Turk and Afghan and Moghul invaders poured into India, the descendants of these Arab settlers followed, to carry on in India the same pursuits that they had carried on in Persia and elsewhere An examination of the facts recorded in the various district gazetteers shows that, from the time of Sultan Mahmud to the late Moghul emperors, there was a constant influx of

individuals and families, some classed as Saiyids, others as Shaikhs, but all claiming Arab descent, and in most cases hailing immediately from Persia and Central Asia[1] As a class, they rendered valuable service to the State both in peace and in war They, and their descendants after them were *qazis*, and *muftis*, and *maulvis* indeed, in some families the title, if not the post seems to have been hereditary There were also Shaikh and Saiyid contingents in the armies whilst the famous Saiyids of Barha[2] were known for their bravery throughout India And many of them rose to great eminence There was a Saiyid dynasty there were many Shaikh and Saiyid generals and governors and statesmen, of whom the greatest were the brothers Hasan Ali (or Abdulla) and Husain Ali the king-makers, who within two years put four emperors on the throne

35. Pseudo-Shaikhs and Saiyids

But considerable though the influx of such families has been it is none the less astounding to find that the Shaikhs and Saiyids of this province, taken together exceed the number of Pathans and Moghuls by fifty per cent The principal cause is undoubtedly to be found in the process described in the well-known Persian proverb—*peshayin qassab budem badaaan gushtem Shaikh ghalla chun arzan shawad imsal Saiyid meshawem* — The first year I was a butcher, the next a Shaikh this year if prices fall I shall become a Saiyid In other words, there was a tendency for the parvenu to claim a higher lineage than his own

[1] The Gorakhpur Saiyids come from Bokhara and Arabia; the Amroha Saiyids from Baghdad, being descended from the Abbasid Khalif; the Allahabad Saiyids from Medina and Persia; the Barabanki Saiyids from Ghazni, Naishapur, and elsewhere in Persia There are Saiyids from Naishapur also in Unao and Fyzabad. There are Shaikhs from Baghdad in Barabanki, Moradabad, Sitapur and Etawah; from Bokhara I Allahabad and Moradabad; from Arabia in Barabanki Lucknow Hardoi, and Partabgarh. These are mere instances; they do not exhaust the list.

[2] This extraordinary family claims descent from Ali and Fatima. Their proximate ancestor was Abul Farah of Wasit in Persia, who came to India about the middle of the 13th century His descendants settled in Muzaffarnagar and Hardoi, where they are still located. Hasan Ali and Husain Ali were members of this family

Farrukhsiyar and his three successors (1719-20).

(c) *Descendants of other Imams than Ali Hasan and Husain* These are

(1) the Abidi from Ali Zain ul Abidin, fourth Imam
(2) the Baqri from Muhammad-al Baqir fifth Imam
(3) the Jafari from Jafar-as-Sadiq sixth Imam
(4) the Kazimi from Musa-al Kazim seventh Imam
(5) the Rizwi or Razwi from Ali ibn Musa-ar Raza, eighth Imam
(6) the Taqwi from Muhammad-at Taqi ninth Imam
(7) the Naqwi from Ali-an-Naqi tenth Imam
(8) the Askari, from Hasan-al-Askari, eleventh Imam [1]

All the Imams were direct descendants of Ali through Husain

(d) *Descendants of other ancestors* These are the Abbasi, the Hashimi the Siddiqi and the Razzaqi

(e) *Sections named after religious teachers* The Jalali the Qadiriya and the Chishti The teachers are respectively Saiyid Jalal-ud-din of Bokhara Saiyid Abdul Qadir Jilani of Baghdad, and Saiyid Abu Ishaq of Chist in Khorasan

5. *Saiyid lineage*

Strictly speaking the term Saiyid is a title belonging only to the Prophet s family (*khandan i nabuwat*) his descendants through his daughter Fatima and her husband Ali his first cousin And most of the Saiyid clans can rightfully use that title The ancestry of all the clans included in the first and third groups is beyond question as is also that of the Razzaqis, who are descended from Abdul Razzaq, son of the famous saint Abdul Qadir Jilani of Baghdad, who belonged to the Hasani Husainis The four sections named after places can fairly be regarded as local sub-divisions of some primary section such as the Bani Fatima But the case of the Chishti Jalali and

[1] According to one school of Shias, there were twelve Imams; the first three Imams were Ali Hasan, and Husain. The last Imam, Muhammad-al-Mahdi disappeared at a tender age, and according to the popular belief will reappear; so that he would have no descendants and no section is named after him.

Qadiriya Saiyids is not quite so clear They take their names from three Saiyid saints or teachers, each of whom also founded a sect of faqirs, which are also called respectively Chishti, Jalali and Qadiriya There has consequently been some confusion between sect and section, even Crooke describes the Chishti section of Saiyids as 'followers' of a Chishti saint[1] But the Chishtis of Bijnor, where they are most numerous, claim not spiritual but physical kinship with Abu Ishaq, as members of the same family and consequently Saiyids. And we can probably assume that the same is true of the Jalalis and Qadiriyas.

None of the four remaining clans appear to be descendants of Fatima Abbasi, Hashimi and Siddiqi are sectional names amongst Shaikhs as well as Saiyids but the two must not be confused The Abbasi Shaikhs, for instance, claim as their eponymous ancestor, Abbas, paternal uncle of the Prophet, who gave his name to the Abbasid dynasty the Abbasi Saiyids of Allahabad are descended from another Abbas, Ali's armour-bearer We know nothing of the origin of the Hashimi[2] or Siddiqi Saiyids The Alwis claim descent from Muhammad ibn-al-Hanafiya, the son of Ali by a wife of the Bani Hanifa tribe, and a prominent figure in the early history of Islam Alwi is also the name of a Shaikh section

38 Shaikh divisions

Most of the Shaikh sections take their name from an eponymous ancestor These are Abbasi, Jafari,[3] and Alwi, already explained, Hashimi, descendants of the Prophet's great grandfather, Siddiqi, named from the first Khalif, Abu Baqr-as-Siddiq; Bani Israil, or sons of Israel, Faruqi, from Khalif Umar,

[1] Incidentally, he mentions the wrong saint—not Abu Ishaq the founder, but his more famous disciple, Salim Chishti of Fatehpur-Sikri *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh,* s v 'Saiyyid'

[2] The only person in history likely to give the name Hashim to a Saiyid clan is Abu Hashim, son of Muhammad ibn-al-Hanafiya, who was leader of the Hashimiya Shias, and recognized as their Imam after his father's death

[3] The derivation here is probably not from the Imam, but from a cousin of Muhammad, well-known for his charity

nicknamed Faruqi Sulaimani and Usmani from the third Khalif Faridi are the followers of the famous saint Baba Farid of Pak Pattan The Qidwai clan claims descent from one Qazi Qidwat a son of the King of Rum (Turkey) who came to India *via* Arabia in the time of Shahab-ud-din Ghori Ansari (the helpers) was the name given to the citizens of Medina after conversion [1] Qureshi was the Arab tribe to which the Prophet belonged Bahlim was another Arab tribe One section has a territorial name Khurasani Pirzada has already been explained Milki is merely an occupational title assumed in the east of the province, which means a landed proprietor By far the largest sections are the Siddiqi and Qureshi who account for over half of the total number of Shaikhs after them—*longo intervallo*—the Ansari Faruqi and Usmani Over 20 per cent of all Shaikhs in 1891 at the census could return no section at all and these have certainly no real right to the name But the proportion of pseudo-Shaikhs must greatly exceed 20 per cent if as is usually alleged [2] the convert used to adopt as his own the section of the *qazi* or *mufti* who admitted him to Islam

39. Racial elements in other Muhammadan groups

There are many occupational groups which are entirely Muhammadan whilst many Hindu castes, also mostly occupational have Muhammadan branches In all such groups, there are many sections with Hindu names which suggests that they are composed of ex-Hindu converts But invariably there are also a certain number of sections with Muslim names Generally such sections would be descended from the Hindu slaves of Muslim masters, who on conversion had adopted as their own the tribe or sept to which their masters belonged But in some cases, the sections may actually be themselves of foreign descent There must, for instance have been Bhishtis in the camps of the Muslim invaders, and there is nothing surprising

[1] As opposed to the Mecca followers of Muhammad who were called Muhajirin, or exiles.

[2] e.g In the provincial district gazetteers, *passim*

in finding a whole series of Bhishti sections, the names of which suggest foreign descent—Arab sections such as Abbasi, Bahlimi, Faruqi, Qureshi, Saiyid, Siddiqi, and Shaikh, Afghan sections, such as Bangash, Ghori, and Pathan, Tartar sections, such as Begi, Moghul, Turki, and Turkman. The Muslim armies, again, must have had their own carriers of grain, fodder, and other necessities, it is natural to find a 'Turkiya' subdivision of the Banjara tribe, with sections such as Alwi, Bahlim, and Shaikh (Arab), Aghwan,[1] and Khilji (Turk). At the present time, of course, certainty is impossible in such a matter, but so much can safely be stated, that there must be many Muslims of foreign extraction in other than the four main groups

40 Islam and the caste system

According to Muhammadan doctrine, all free Muslims are equal A Muslim may marry any woman outside the prohibited degrees (which are much the same as in the English law), provided that she belongs to a 'scriptural' or revealed religion,[2] and though some kinds of food are forbidden, commensal restrictions are unknown. The Hindu caste system, therefore, is entirely incompatible with the tenets of Islam. And amongst those Muslims of foreign descent whose ancestors brought the religion of the Prophet into India, practice corresponds with theory Saiyid, Shaikh, Pathan, Moghul, are not castes, though usually spoken of as such, they are not even tribes. They are merely names given to groups of tribes that are, or are supposed to be, of similar blood.

41 Caste amongst converted Hindus, Crooke's statement

But the same cannot be said of Muslims that have been converted from Hinduism. 'Caste,' says Mr. Crooke, 'is not confined to votaries of the Hindu faith On the contrary, it is in its nature much more social than religious. It has been one of the most perplexing problems which beset

[1] A corrupt form of Afghan

[2] *Kitabi*—follower of a religion possessing a sacred and revealed book, namely, a Muslim, Jew, or Christian, but not a Hindu, Parsi, or Buddhist

the Christian missionary to reconcile the restrictions of caste with the perfect liberty of Christianity Islam has boldly solved the difficulty by recognizing and adopting caste in its entirety Not only does the converted Rajput, Gujar, and Jat remain a member of his original sept or section but he preserves most of those restrictions on social intercourse intermarriage and the like which make up the peasant s conception of caste As Mr Ibbetson remarks[1] Almost the only difference which the convert makes is to shave his scalp-lock and the upper edge of his moustache, to repeat the Muhammadan creed in a mosque and to add the Muhammadan to the Hindu marriage ceremony

4 Criticism of Crooke's statement

This statement requires considerable modification In the first place no convert could remain a member of his original sept or section for his conversion would automatically involve his outcasting He might no doubt retain the name of that sept or section but he must henceforth look for his wife and his friends outside it Secondly, the importance of these deviations from Muslim law or custom varies greatly In many cases, they amount to little more than a preference for a Hindu mode of address, such as Thakur or for buttoning the coat in the Hindu fashion on the left side, instead of in the Muhammadan fashion on the right And thirdly, the statement is not universally true There are many converts from Hinduism—especially those whose conversion is of old standing or who have some reason for desiring to conceal their Hindu past—who are strict and even bigoted in their observances of the tenets of Islam Nevertheless, it is true that many converts, when they changed their faith did not change or only partially changed their social customs In theory Islam should not admit the validity of any alien custom which is contrary to or in conflict with its own doctrines

[1] Later Sir Denzil Ibbetson author of various works on Punjab ethnography
Crooke *Tribes and Castes of the N.-W.P and Oudh* Vol. I Introduction p. xvii.

But in practice, Islam has accepted the situation, indeed, every proselytizing religion must be prepared to compromise in such matters with its converts, if it is to retain them[1] In practice, too, the law courts have held more than once that a convert may carry his original laws and usages with him, and may be governed by them even after conversion

It is necessary to explain the legal status of Muhammadan women, before describing the marriage customs which depend on it The woman's position under Muhammadan law is infinitely superior to that of her Hindu sister She remains under the parental roof and authority till she is of age, and during her minority her father has the power to give her in marriage without her consent But even that power is limited, for the guardian next in order to her father has the right to object if the marriage is prejudicial to her interests, and if any other guardian than the father gives her in marriage, she has an unqualified option to ratify or annul the marriage on attaining her majority She then acquires her own independent rights She shares in the inheritance of her parents with her brothers In no circumstances can she, when of age, be married without her own consent, on the other hand, she can marry whom she pleases, and unless the marriage is one of which the law disapproves, no man can interfere A Moslem marriage is a civil contract, which gives the husband only such power over the wife's person as the law defines, and none whatever over her goods or property The wife's identity is not merged in that of her husband She retains her own individuality, she remains mistress of her own estate, which she can alienate or divide at will Her earnings are her own, she can sue her own debtors, even

43 The status of women in Islam

[1] Christianity has had to do so more than once—for instance, in connexion with the date of Christmas Day The 25th December at Rome was the birthday of the sun, a pagan festival which the early fathers could not keep their converts from celebrating, until (in St Augustine's words) Julius I changed 'the birthday of the sun' into 'the birthday of Him who made the sun'

her own husband and be sued by them It is true that she is kept in seclusion, but the *pardah* system is not enjoined by Muhammadan law indeed it only came into vogue about 744 being adopted from Persia and Byzantium as a safeguard against the habits of the Omayyad Khalif Walid II a depraved and tyrannical debauchee. The Muslims who uphold the custom refer to the Prophet s remarks on the privacy of women [1] but those were to the address of the Arab tribes with whom he was primarily concerned and cannot be regarded as warrant for its present existence Nor is there anything in Muhammadan law which makes its perpetuation necessary

44 Endogamy in Islam

Since, as has been stated above a Muslim may choose as a wife any woman outside the prohibited degrees who professes one of the three scriptural religions it would seem to follow that there can be no endogamy within the Muhammadan social system But that is a general proposition the law of Islam does not necessarily *approve* of every marriage or other act that it *permits* and has provided safeguards against those marriages of which it disapproves which have the effect of greatly reducing the circle within which a Muslim may select a wife Custom too steps in to contract that circle further still The legal restriction exists in both branches of Islam the Sunni and the Shia but is important only in the former The customary restriction exists amongst all Muhammadans alike

45 The legal restriction of al kafat among Sunnis

The Prophet seems to have had a horror of ill-assorted marriages—as was natural in view of the high respect in which he ordained that women should be held Take ye care said he that none contract women in marriage but their proper guardians and

[1] History shows that the women of the Prophet own family enjoyed no little freedom. His wife, Ayesha, led her own troops at the battle of the Camel in 656 gainst Ali Fathma, his daughter often took part in political discussions. And his granddaughter Zainab, faced her assailants fter the butchery of Kerbela in an attempt to save her nephew Husain's son (680).

that they be not so contracted except with their equals."[1] On this saying the Hanafi school of Sunni law, which is the only Sunni school with a large following in this province, has built up the doctrine of *al kafat* (equality, i e. in marriage) This doctrine provides.—(1) that if a guardian (*wali*), even a father, contract a minor of either sex in marriage to anybody who is not his or her 'equal', then the marriage is invalid,[2] and can be annulled by the *qazi* on the application of the mother, of the guardian next in degree, or even of a friend, or on that of the minor when he or she reaches the age of discretion.[3]

(2) that if an adult woman, being *sui juris,* contracts herself in marriage to a man who is not her 'equal', the marriage may be annulled by the *qazi* on the application of any relative on her father's side who would have been her guardian for marriage (*wali*) had she been a minor—provided only that no such relative has already consented to the marriage, or that no child has already been born.

(3) that when an adult man marries a bride who is his inferior, the marriage is valid, because a man always raises his wife to his own rank, so that the marriage ceases to be unequal

Six ingredients are necessary to produce 'equality'. Both husband and wife must be (1) free, and (2) Muslims They must be equal in respect of (3) descent or lineage (*nasab*), (4) profession, (5) character (*hasab*), and (6) means[4] As regards *nasab,* certain rules of precedence are laid down, as follows·—

(*a*) An Arab is superior to an *ajami*, or non-Arab Muslim

[1] Ameer Ali, *Mahommedan Law,* 4th edition, Vol II, pp 413-414

[2] So Badr-ud-din-Tyabji, *Principles of Muhammadan Law,* 2nd edition, pp 152-156 Ameer Ali, op cit, p 414, holds that the marriage is invalid if the guardian is father or grandfather, but that if the guardian is any other relative, it is void *ab initio*

[3] Which in this case is puberty, i e 15 years

[4] Of these requisites, (1) freedom, at the present day, has no meaning, (2) a marriage with a Jewess or Christian is 'unequal', it would be valid, however, for an adult male, (4) profession includes trade or business, on the girl's side, of course, it would be the profession of her father or nearest male relative, (5) character includes morality and piety, (6) 'means', in practice, is confined to the man, and is interpreted as capacity to pay the dower and maintain a wife

(b) Amongst Arabs
 (i) the descendants of Ali[1] rank highest,
 (ii) the Qureshi rank above all other Arabs save Ali s descendants
(c) Descendants of the Khalifs, though born and bred in other countries, are equal to domiciled Arabs
(d) A learned *ajami* is the equal of an ignorant Arab, even if he be a descendant of Ali for the worth of learning is greater than the worth of family [2]
(e) Hanafis and Shafeis (another school of law) are equal
(f) A *qasi* or *faqih* (jurist or theologian) ranks higher than a merchant, and a merchant than a tradesman

46. Effect of al kafat on Sunni endogamy

So stands the Sunni law And prima facie, it might be expected that the strict observance of rules which limit a man s or woman s choice of a mate to families of lineage equal to his or her own must necessarily produce a system of endogamy as restrictive as that of Hinduism But that is not the case For in the first place, the rules of *al kafat* are not peremptory but permissive The unequal marriage is not void, but merely voidable at the option of certain persons and if no entitled person chooses to exercise his option the marriage stands Secondly the prohibition against an unequal marriage would as a rule only operate in respect of a man s first wife, for should he marry a second wife he would usually be of full age, and at liberty to marry beneath him if he chose; nor would the woman s *wali* object since a wife is raised to her husband s status[3] And thirdly *nasab* is not the

[1] Ali was husband of Fatima, daughter of the Prophet by his first wife Khadija.

[2] Ameer Ali op. cit. p. 416.

[3] A man could not, however marry a woman of higher rank than himself.

only criterion of 'equality'. As we have seen, it was laid down in ancient times that learning could override birth, so that a low-born scholar could marry a woman of high rank;[1] and at the present day the *wali* who had to select a bride or bridegroom for his ward would certainly attach as much weight to the candidate's *hasab* and to his other personal qualifications as to his *nasab* In short, the restrictions of *al kafat* are neither rigid, nor universal, nor dependent on birth alone; whilst the endogamous restrictions of Hinduism are all of these.

47 *Sunni endogamous groups*

Nor can it be said that the rules of *al kafat* have resulted in the formation of endogamous groups. It is, no doubt, possible to arrange the existing Muslim tribes in certain groups, according to their precedence The first group would then consist of 'descendants of Ali'—all Saiyids, and the Alwi Shaikhs The second would include the 'Qureshi' sections—the Qureshi Shaikhs, and other Shaikh sections that are descended from individual Quresh—i e Abbasi, Faruqi, Hashimi, Jafari, Siddiqi, and Usmani[2] The third would include all other Shaikhs of true Arab descent The fourth would be *ajamis*—Pathans and Moghuls The fifth would be the pseudo-Shaikhs But though it is probably true that no member of such a group would, in ordinary circumstances, marry without it, yet it could not be asserted that he never would marry without it in *any* circumstances Such a grouping would be purely theoretical And, indeed, it is doubtful whether *al kafat*, at the present time, has much practical importance, except for those who strictly observe the written law For the ordinary man, the question of a potential bride or bridegroom's suitability is decided on its merits, when the

[1] At the present time, learning (in the shape of a degree) would probably still have its value in the appraisement of a matrimonial candidate's qualifications

[2] Abbasi and Hashimi are descended from Muhammad's paternal uncle and great-grandfather, Jafari from his cousin (Ali's brother), the other three from the first three Khalifs

question arises, and equality of birth is usually secured in quite another manner, which will be presently described

48 Al kafat among Shias

Shias do not approve of marriages with any but Muhammadan women, except in the *muta*, or temporary form On the other hand, they hold to the principle that all Muslims are equal and have consequently whittled down *al kafat* to two requisites only, namely, Islam and means So long as the bridegroom is able to maintain a wife a union between any Muslim and any Muslimah is valid however unequal they may be in rank or descent It is lawful for a free woman to marry a slave, for an Arabian woman to marry a Persian, or for a woman of the tribe of Hashimi to marry a non Hashimite, and *vice versa* Amongst Shias, therefore, this doctrine has no effect on marriage save that it makes Islam taken as a whole, endogamous Shias, however, form a very small minority in the province There are under 200 000 Shias to over five million Sunnis

49 The marriage circle

Both amongst Sunnis and Shias it is the custom to select a wife whenever possible, from a relatively small circle of close relations, including not only a man s own family but families with which his own has in the past intermarried This custom is probably due to the peculiarities of the Muhammadan law of inheritance, and is very strictly observed Any attempt to depart from it is likely to lead to family dissension as is proved by information that I received in 1911 from a Government officer—a Saiyid and I believe, a Shia His own circle consisted of relatives living in a few neighbouring villages When the time came for his daughter s marriage he was anxious to go outside the circle to find a husband for being an educated man himself he wanted an educated son in law and none was available within the circle He was, however, compelled by family pressure to agree to his daughter s betrothal to an illiterate youth The natural result of this custom is that the

Ameer Ali, op. cit. p. 417 *note* (quotation from *Shareya*).
[2] *Census R port U.P* 1911 p. 223.

marriage of cousins is extremely common. No sort of cousin is within the prohibited degrees, my informant himself was married to a second cousin It may be mentioned, as a curious proof of the frequency of cousin marriage, that Muhammadans constantly address or describe their parents-in-law by the terms for the various kinds of uncle and aunt: the habit is natural because the parents-in-law so often *are* uncle and aunt. It is obvious that such a 'marriage circle' ensures equality of descent, and it is the only endogamous group of which a Muhammadan takes any account I am informed on good authority that these restrictions on marriage, whether dependent on the law of *al kafat* or on custom, are much more closely observed in the rural areas than in the towns.

50 Other Muhammadan marriage customs (a) Polygamy

The law of Islam permits polygamy to the extent of four wives, but the permission is conditional "You *may* marry two wives, or three, or four, but not more, but if you cannot deal equitably or justly with all, you *shall* marry only one"[1] The condition is one that an ordinary man cannot possibly carry out, in a polygamous family, favouritism of some kind is unavoidable And as early as the 9th century, there were jurists who held that monogamy alone was lawful At the present day, the tendency, in advanced Muslim communities, is to regard polygamy as undesirable, if not positively unlawful, and that is the case in this province, where Muhammadans rarely contract a second marriage, unless no son has been born of the first This is proved by the census returns, the number of married women exceed the number of married men by between 2 and 3 per cent

51 (b) Remarriage of widows

The remarriage of widows is not only permitted by the law but enjoined in the Koran The first wife of the Prophet himself was a widow And since one contract has terminated by the death of one of the contracting parties, there is clearly no reason why the other

[1] Koran IV, 3

should not enter into another similar contract But such remarriage is uncommon, at all events amongst the better classes The usual explanation of this phenomenon is that it is due to imitation of the Hindu custom but since the interference with the widow s freedom which it involves is contrary to the principles underlying the marriage law the explanation is not convincing

52 (c) *Divorce*

Divorce is permitted by the Muhammadan law that is merely the natural result of the conception of marriage as a contract But it is one of the permitted things that are not approved Divorce said the Prophet, is the most detestable before the Almighty God of all permitted things ;[1] and accordingly it is hedged about by many legal restrictions of all kinds In this province, divorce of a divorce In one case the dowry payable at divorce is most exceptional indeed, it becomes almost impossible as a result of the custom of demanding an enormous dowry at marriage which becomes payable only as the result by a husband whose entire income was some Rs 700 a month amounted to Rs 1 50 000 Sir Richard Burn states that about 1901, in connexion with a law suit on the question of dowry opinions were collected regarding the advisability of allowing courts to reduce excessive dowries and that all classes of Muhammadans unanimously condemned the proposal [2] which shows that in India at all events, the opinion held by the Prophet of divorce prevails

53 (d) *Muta or temporary marriages*

The Akhbari school of Shias permit *muta* or temporary marriages—i.e marriages for a fixed period which may be as short as a day or as long as a century These are very unusual in the province though they may occasionally be used as a convenient cloak for unions of a more or less disreputable kind This custom too is subjected to many legal restrictions obviously if the period is sufficiently long, there is little

[1] Ameer Ali op. cit., p. 530.
[2] *Census Report U.P.*, 1901 p. 120.

practical difference between a *muta* and an ordinary marriage

54 The Muhammadan marriage ceremony

The marriage ceremony itself affords adequate evidence of the principles on which the marriage law is based The terms of the contract, including the dowry, are usually settled beforehand On the day appointed, the bridal parties assemble at the house of the bride's father The bride's *vakil,* or proxy, who is usually an elderly relative, visits her where she sits behind the *pardah,* with a woman attendant, and in the presence of two witnesses asks her permission to contract her in marriage to the bridegroom On receiving her reply, which is conveyed by the attendant, he returns and signifies the girl's consent to the parties. The *qazi*[1] then asks the bridegroom if he is content, and on receiving an affirmative reply performs the service This consists of the repetition in Arabic by the bridegroom after the *qazi,* of the Muhammadan creed and articles of belief, and a prayer of praise (*dua-kunat*) The *qazi* next causes the bridegroom to repeat after him in Arabic the formula of the marriage contract, and explains its meaning, which done, the *vakil* of the bride and the bridegroom clasp hands, and the former says, 'The bride (naming her and her father) has through my agency in the presence of two witnesses given her gracious consent to your marriage with her, and such a dowry is settled upon her, do you consent to it?' The bridegroom replies, 'With my whole heart and soul, to my marriage with this lady as well as to this settlement upon her, do I consent', and repeats the word 'consent' thrice. In conclusion, the *qazi* pronounces a blessing on the married pair The formal demand by the *vakil* of the bride's consent to the marriage (even if she be a minor), and the formal intimation of that consent to the bridegroom are both significant[2]

[1] Nowadays, the *qazi* is some man selected for his knowledge of the law, the post has been abolished Amongst Shias, the work of the *qazi* is done by the *mujtahid*

[2] Based partly on Ameer Ali, op cit, p 623, partly on information from a private source

55 Castes of converts from Hinduism

Apart from the four principal tribal divisions descended from Muhammadan invaders, there are a certain number of Muhammadan castes, a large number of Hindu castes that have Muhammadan branches, and a still larger number which possess a few members who have embraced Islam The census lists of 1901 showed in all 133 castes that were wholly or partially Muhammadan the lists of 1911 only showed 94, but a good many small castes had been thrown together under a single head Of these, 54 in 1901 and 41 in 1911 had less than 1,000 Muhammadan members and can be neglected altogether Certain other entries of 1901 may also be neglected for other reasons these are the Hijra, Kunera, Lakhera Kabariya, Nalband Nanbai Qalaigar Raj Rangsaz, and Habshi The Hijras are eunuchs they cannot obviously be counted a true caste The Habshis are descendants of Abyssinian slaves of the Oudh court now extinct The Nalband (farrier) Nanbai (baker) Qalaigar (tinsmith), Raj (mason) and Rangsaz (painter) are occupations, not castes The Kunera is really a Barhai subcaste Lakhera and Kabariya are merely other names for Churihar and Kunjra respectively

The rest can be divided into three classes —

(1) Castes now entirely Muhammadan though recruited partly or wholly from Hindu converts —These are the Atashbaz, Baidguar Bhand Bhathiyara, Bhishti[1]* Biloch, Bisati, Dafali * Dogar, Gaddi Gandhi Gara, Ghogar * Ghosi * Hurkiya, Iraqi Jhojha Julaha * Kanmail * Khanzada Khumra * Kingariya Lalkhan Malkana, Mirasi * Nau-Muslim Niyariya * Pankhiya Qalandar * Qassab * Ranghar and Turk

(2) Castes with larger Muhammadan than Hindu branches —These are the Churihar * Darzi * Dhuniya,*

[1] The Muhammadan castes or branches which are marked with an asterisk possess permanent tribal councils. See Chapter VI par 4. The Ghogar and Kanmail are new castes; see Chapter XI, pars. 9 and 11 for notes on them. There are also notes in the same chapter on the Chik, par 21; Khumra, par 27; Manihar and Churihar par 32

Kunjra,* Manihar,* Meo or Mewati, Rain, Rangrez, Saiqalgar and Tawaif

(3) Castes with larger Hindu than Muhammadan branches.—These are the Ahir, Baghban, Baheliya, Banjara, Barhai, Bhangi, Bhat, Chamar, Chhipi, Chik, Dharhi, Dhobi, Dom, Goriya, Gujar, Halwai,* Jat, Kahar, Kamboh, Kumhar,* Lohar, Mali, Mallah, Mochi, Nai, Nat,* Rajput, Saini, Sonar, Tagh and Teli.

56 The marriage customs of ex-Hindu converts

In the matter of marriage the customs of communities descended from Hindu converts are often a curious mixture of Hindu and Muhammadan rites. In the first place, contrary to Muhammadan custom, almost all of them are strictly endogamous; and many of them are divided into endogamous sections. Amongst the Bhands, Gujars, and Rangrez, Sunnis and Shias do not intermarry—a curious pair of endogamous sections; and in the Saiqalgar caste there are two endogamous sections, Pathan and Shaikh. The Dafali will not marry his daughter into families that reverence other saints, or godlings other than his own. Muhammadan Rajputs preserve their Hindu rules of hypergamy, so do the Iraqi and the Gujar, in the shape of refusing to give daughters to families from which they have taken wives. These two castes, with the Kunjra and Meo, also preserve the Hindu exogamous sections; whilst the Iraqi, Turk, Gandhi, Kunjra, Ghogar, and one or two more castes restrict the custom of cousin marriage—undoubtedly a reminiscence of their former Hinduism, and contrary both to Muhammadan law and custom. Many castes, such as the Dafali, the Iraqi, the Churihar, the Dhuniya, the Kunjra, the Rangrez, and the Gujar, preserve more or less completely the Hindu wedding rites, save that the *qazi* replaces the *pandit*, and Allah, the Prophet, or some saint replaces the family godlings. The Bhat goes further still, he carries out first a Hindu wedding in its fullest form, and then follows it up by a Muhammadan ceremony. Many castes still employ a Brahman *pandit* to fix an auspicious day for weddings and other ceremonies; such are the

Bhat the Dafali the Ghosi, the Gujar, the Iraqi, the Kingarlya, the Meo and the Ranghar The rules of adoption amongst Iraqis and Dafalis, the rules of succession amongst Iraqis, Mukeri Banjaras, and Chunhars are much more Hindu than Muhammadan Many castes have altered the divorce law of Islam, permitting it only for infidelity, and as a rule only with the consent of the *panchayat* such are the Bhishti Chunhar Dafali Gandhi Iraqi Kingariya, Kunjra, and Rangrez whilst the Bhand, if a wife is divorced for infidelity does not allow her to remarry Most castes permit the remarriage of widows, but in almost every case the Hindu custom of the levirate also exists to modify it whilst the Gandhi forbids it altogether and the Iraqi only allows remarriage, whether of a widow or of a divorced wife with the consent of the *panchayat* The Kunjra permits a man to marry two sisters at once, which the law of Islam forbids In fact most of these castes of Hindu converts preserve some trace of their former marriage customs and many preserve a great deal

57 *Other customs of ex-Hindu converts*

But there are survivals of other Hindu customs too The Ghosi and Kingarlya for instance, will neither eat beef themselves nor eat in the company of any Musulman who does Many drink liquor contrary to the law of the Prophet and some eat forbidden food Others maintain the Hindu taboos on the occasion of a death Many worship Hindu deities especially Kali and observe Hindu festivals The Bhand worships a deified ancestor Saiyid Hasan the Bhishti worships his *mashk* (waterskin) The Dafali bathes in the Ganges in connexion with important ceremonies Finally a distinctively Muhammadan religious rite has been modified to resemble an equally distinctive Hindu rite The Shab Barat is a festival when gifts are made to the poor in the name of God the prophet and all relations and descendants But Indian Musulmans now hold that the ceremony confers direct spiritual benefit on deceased ancestors and even that its omission would result in the barring of the gates of Paradise to

all members of the family who had died during the previous year This, of course, is reminiscent of the Hindu *sraddha* Many castes of Hindu converts, not content with making this offering on the usual occasion, repeat it at one or other of the Ids, sometimes at both

Some brief explanations may be given of the nature and origin of certain of the castes mentioned above.

58 *Explanatory remarks regarding the origin of certain Muhammadan castes*

(1) *Converted Rajputs*—(*a*) The Khanzadas of the United Provinces are found in Oudh, according to one account, they are the descendants of Tilok Chand and his followers, Bachgoti Rajputs to whom Babar offered the choice of Islam or imprisonment, according to another account, they were converted at an earlier date, probably in the reign of Sikandar Lodi

(*b*) The Ranghars were Bhatti Rajputs, converted in the reigns of Qutb-ud-Din (1206-1210) and Ala-ud-din Khilji (1295-1315)

(*c*) The Lalkhanis are Bargujars of Bulandshahr, descended from Lal Singh, a favourite of Akbar, who was given the title of Lal Khan, his grandson was the first member of the family to embrace Islam, in the reign of Aurangzeb

(*d*) The Bhale Sultans of Bulandshahr became Muhammadans to please Khizr Khan, Timur's protégé, but previous to this they had been closely connected with the Musulman rulers both under Shahab-ud-din Ghori and Ghias-ud-din Tughlaq Those of Sultanpur were probably converted in the time of Sher Shah, King of Bengal

There are Muhammadan branches in the following important Rajput septs: Bais, Bargujar, Bhatti, Bisen, Chandel, Chauhan, Gautam, Panwar, Raikwar, Rathor, Sombansi, and Tomar, besides other septs of less importance.

(ii) *Converted pseudo-Rajputs*.—The origin of the *Garas Jhojhas* and *Dogars* is uncertain They are all agricultural castes belonging to the western districts. They all claim to be ex Rajputs, but in the case of the Jhojhas, at all events, the claim is very weak Indeed, the Jhojhas are more probably descended from converted slaves of the Moghuls There is possibly more in the claim of the Garas and Dogars

(iii) *Converted Ahirs*.—The *Gaddis* and *Ghosis* by occupation are dairymen and cowherds They are mostly converted Ahirs in fact in 1891, both were recorded as Ahir subcastes The Gaddis are most numerous in Oudh and with other low-caste tribes were subdued by the Rajput immigrants from the west The Ghosis, in the eastern districts, claim to be ex Gujars

(iv) *Banjara sections*.—(*a*) The *Baidguar* caste is clearly composed of converts from the Hindu Baid Banjaras It has two endogamous sections—Baid who carry grain on pack animals, and Guar who tend cattle

(*b*) The *Turkiya Banjara* (already mentioned in par 39), assert that they came originally from Multan whence they moved into the Deccan and then into Rohilkhand They are not to be confused with the Turk caste of the Rampur State (see below)

(*c*) The *Mukeri Banjaras* claim to have come originally from Mecca which they helped Father Abraham to build and as a natural corollary to belong to the Quresh tribe which resided in and around Mecca They have a larger proportion of Muslim sections than most similar castes, so that quite possibly they have a considerable admixture of foreign blood

(v) *The Turk*.—The *Turk* is an agricultural caste found in Rampur State and the Kumaon Tarai They deny that they are converted Hindus, they claim to be of Turki blood and to have entered India with Shahab-ud-din Ghori But the claim is very doubtful,

for their customs are much more Hindu than Muhammadan. They are, for instance, very strictly endogamous, and marry early—earlier even than most Hindu castes.

(vi) *Castes of singers, dancers, and musicians.*—The *Kingariya, Dharhi,* and *Mirasi* are all singers and musicians. They appear to be closely akin, the Muhammadan Dharhis and Mirasis are said to intermarry, whilst Kingariyas and Dharhis are probably the same people under different names. The Mirasi is also known as Dom Mirasi, and may spring from the Dom tribe, the Kingariyas and Dharhis are chiefly converts from the Nat and other vagrant races. The *Bhand, Dafali, Hurkiya* and *Tawaif* all belong to the same class of society. The Tawaif is the class of dancing girls and prostitutes, it recruits from all castes, whether Hindu or Muhammadan. The Hurkiya is a small class of pimps, musicians, and attendants on Muhammadan dancing girls The Bhand is a mimic, jester, and buffoon One of the Bhand sections claims descent from one Saiyid Hasan, a courtier of Timur, who composed a humorous poem in Arabic for his master's pleasure The other section was imported from Kashmir by Nasir-ud-din Haidar, King of Oudh. The sectional nomenclature shows that the origin of the caste is partially, at all events, Hindu The Dafali is a beggar, drummer, and hedge priest

(vii) *Occupational castes connected with food and drink.*—(*a*) The *Bhathiyara* is an innkeeper and vendor of cooked meat, and tobacco The caste consists partly of Hindu converts, but is now entirely Muhammadan The inn (*sarai*) is a very old Hindu institution, dating back to Chandragupta at least. It is perhaps natural that the occupation has passed into Muhammadan hands, the caste restrictions on cooking and food make it difficult for a Hindu to be of much assistance to others as a cook As matters are, a *sarai* to a Hindu is a place where he can obtain lodging, not board or attendance.

(b) The *Bhishti* caste is entirely Muhammadan the Hindu water-carrier is a Kahar The caste, however is largely composed of converts The Bhishti is also known as Saqqa —an Arabic word meaning one who gives to drink which has recently become prominent, as a result of events in Afghanistan

(c) The *Iraqi* is a curious caste to find in Islam Its special occupation is the sale of liquor, the use of which is, of course forbidden by that religion According to one theory, they are Persian immigrants from Iraq (Mesopotamia) whilst others derive the name from *araq* liquor' More probably they are converted Kalwars Some of them ape Hinduism to the extent of buttoning their coat to the left and wearing no beard both in Hindu fashion but this is merely because it suits their Hindu customers better

(viii) The *Malkana* —Malkana is the name given to a group of miscellaneous converts residing mostly in the Agra and Muttra districts Little was known of this caste till 1923 when enquiry disclosed the following facts The date of their conversion is unknown it cannot be later than the reign of Jahangir for they possess documents of that period and may be much earlier The name was originally a title its meaning (*mālik*= king) shows that they were of high position Most of them seem to be of Rajput stock (Jadon Sakarwar Chandel Kachhwaha) but some claim to be descendants of Jat Agarwal and Brahman ancestors Their conversion has made very little impression upon them Most of their customs are Hindu for instance Hindu priests perform a number of the preliminary marriage ceremonies, and are followed by the *qazi* who performs the Muhammadan rite Many of them also preserve the Hindu exogamous restrictions They worship Hindu deities, observe Hindu festivals, and avoid commensal relations with other Muhammadans They even have

Hindu names Almost their only Muhammadan observances are circumcision and burial of the dead

Principal authorities —Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh* (1896)
Census Reports, U P, 1901 and 1911
Rose, *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N-W F P* (1911)
Elphinstone, *History of India*
Lane-Poole, *Mediaeval India under Muhammadan Rule* (1917)
Ameer Ali, *Mahommedan Law* (4th edition)

CHAPTER XI

NEW CASTES AND NEW INFORMATION ABOUT OLD CASTES

1 Mutability of caste

In previous chapters there is ample proof that the caste system is not rigid, but mutable and that its evolution is still proceeding new castes and subcastes come into existence, old customs fall into abeyance One result of this is that no account of caste, however complete and accurate it was at the time when it was written remains so for long Such a book as Mr Crooke s *Tribes and Castes of the N.-W P and Oudh* requires periodical revision if it is to be kept up to date [1]

This book is not an attempt to revise that great work indeed its plan is entirely different None the less, it will be useful to devote a chapter to the description of new castes which were not in existence when Mr Crooke wrote and to such fresh information about old castes as has come to light since his time

2 Ignorance of Indians about caste

It has already been stated that the average Indian whatever his religion or community, knows little or nothing about anybody s caste but his own His knowledge of his own caste is more extensive but even so though he may know facts he is generally ignorant of principles, and also of the origin and history of the caste itself At the census of 1911 in the United Provinces, there were 667 Hindu caste entries, which on examination were reduced to something under 300 and even of these a certain number were subcaste names which for various reasons[2] could not be

[1] The book was published in 1896 It has not been revised since. It is to be hoped that revised edition will not much longer be delayed.

Many of the f cts given in this chapter have already been mentioned but as rule only incidentally by way of illustration of some discussion.

[2] Usually because the same name was ttached to subcastes in several castes.

definitely assigned to any particular caste, or functional names which were not true caste names, though they possibly denoted new castes in process of formation.

3 Wilful misrepresentation about caste

Apart from ignorance, however, there are many cases of wilful misrepresentation, dictated by various motives Sometimes a Hindu prefers, when asked his caste, to give, in lieu of its name, some more or less honorific title which is appropriated to it. For instance, a Kayastha may describe himself as 'Lala', a Jat as 'Chaudhri', a Bhangi as 'Mehtar'. Others may return an occupational name, or the name of a subcaste, or the name of his *gotra* or family, for no better reason than that they sound more distinguished For instance, there were such occupational entries in the census returns of 1911 as '*zargar*' (jeweller), '*nilgar*' (worker in indigo), '*tikligar*' (spangle-maker) The Kayastha-Mochi preferred to call himself Kayastha-Zingar (i e saddler instead of shoemaker). Jaiswara Chamars almost invariably describe themselves as 'Jaiswara', for that is also a subcaste of many much higher castes Similarly the Kori-Chamar will always call himself Kori—or even by slurring the first syllable try to make himself out a Koiri [1] From time to time, too, castes or particular branches of castes, who, having acquired wealth, are endeavouring to rise in the social scale, claim descent from one of the three twice-born classes of Manu, and in pursuance of their claim they call themselves by a name that conforms to it. These claims may or may not be justified some of them undoubtedly are so, and (if the description of the growth of the caste system given in an earlier chapter is correct), there is no *a priori* improbability in any of them But when, for instance, a Bhuinhar or a Belwar calls himself a Brahman, the result is but to increase the difficulty of classification by caste The vanity which induces such

[1] A Kori-Chamar tent-pitcher once earned a severe beating from his fellow servants for playing this trick, and so inducing them to drink water at his hands

an action is perfectly intelligible it operates also in other races, as for instance, when Smith spells his name with a y and a redundant e or Moses and Jacobson become Moss and Jameson by deed poll but it is none the less troublesome to the investigator

4 Claims to high descent

There have been many new claims to twice born descent since Mr Crooke wrote, whilst fresh information has been collected which bears on old claims

Bhuinhars have claimed to be Maithila Brahmans which claim was admitted in 1911 [1] to the extent of allowing Bhuinhars to describe themselves as Bhuinhar Brahmans thus making the caste a Brahman subcaste, such as Gaur Saraswat and others

The Oudh Belwars have also claimed Brahman descent here too the claim appears to be correct Their main subcaste was always Sanadh which is a Brahman subcaste They appear to be in origin the same as the Naik Banjaras found in Gorakhpur who also claim to be Sanadhs Both are orthodox Brahmans save that they smoke tobacco in some places they get the special greeting reserved for Brahmans; they have or had the habit of sitting *dharna* at a debtor s door whilst in one district Sanadhs sometimes intermarry with them (In this district it should be explained they have given up the un-Brahmanical occupation and customs which were the original cause of their separation)

The Tagas claim to be Brahmans who have renounced the acceptance of gifts the claim though probable enough is not so far as I know proved in the same sense as the claims of the Belwar and Bhuinhar Other

By the census authorities. All these claimants have contracted the habit of regarding these authorities as College of Heralds, much t the latter inconvenience. Their proper course would be to apply to some learned Brahman for a *vyavastha*, or declaration. See *Census R port India* 19 pp. 379-380.

i.e. of sitting there without food or water till the debt is paid thus threatening the debtor with the moral guilt of Brahman s death. The practice is, of course ineffective except in the case of Brahman; it is forbidden by the Penal Code.

castes that have claimed Brahmanical descent are certain Bhats, the Dhiman Barhais, and the Lohars. the former call themselves 'Brahmbhat', the two latter 'Visvakarmabansi Brahman' In these cases, the castes have advanced elaborate, but unconvincing, arguments to prove their claims, though that does not imply that the claims are necessarily wrong

Kurmis, Gadariyas, Karnwals, Mair and Tank Sonars, and Kayasthas all claim Kshatriya descent None of these claims have so far been satisfactorily proved but there is no prima facie improbability in the claims of the Kurmis, Sonars and Kayasthas As is pointed out elsewhere,[1] all ancient authorities are curiously silent about the agricultural castes it is not possible to believe that there were no landowners amongst the old Kshatriya clans, and the Kurmi, which is an agricultural caste of high position and high antiquity, may very well represent, at all events in respect of some of his branches, the old Kshatriya landowners, or at least their *vrisala* successors in interest[2] The Sonar is an occupational caste also of high antiquity, and some of its subcastes may very well be of Kshatriya descent, for since the guild of goldsmiths must have been of high position and repute, it would be one of those that Kshatriyas would be most likely to join The arguments by which the Kayasthas support their claim are remarkably ingenious The ancient Kshatriyas, they say, were not merely the rulers and soldiers of the community their traditional occupation was 'public service' generally There were secretariats and public offices in old days, which must have been staffed by Kshatriya secretaries and clerks It is from this ancient bureaucracy that the Kayasthas claim descent Unfortunately, what independent evidence there is suggests that the 'civil service' of ancient India—in its upper grades at all events—was recruited rather from Brahmans than Kshatriyas

Kalwars claim to be Batham Vaisyas, Kandus and

[1] Chapter XII, par 5
[2] Chapter II, par 10

Halwais claim to be Madhesiya Vaisyas and in each of these castes there is a subcaste of the appropriate name at the present day There is, perhaps less improbability prima facie, in this than in any other similar claim The Kandu indeed is generally admitted to be one of the Vaisya branches, formerly and incorrectly called Baniya

The Khattris have long claimed to be Kshatriyas, who have taken to trade and the claim was admitted in 1901 to the extent of putting them in the same social group as the modern Rajput clans The fact that Saraswat Brahmans will eat either *kachcha* or *pakka* food cooked by them as their hereditary priests, points to a very high and very pure descent A complete list of the claims advanced in 1911 and 1921 is added as an appendix [1]

5 *New castes* (i) *Baghban*

In 1901 it was reported that the Baghban subcaste had split off from the Mali caste whilst Mr Crooke mentions Baghbans whom he connects with the Kachhis It has since been reported that they have four exogamous groups, the Baramasi Sani Chhajarwar and Karonia Baramasi in the western districts is another name for Kachhi and means those who cultivate their lands all the year round Sani is given as a Baghban subcaste by Mr Crooke Karonia is a Mali section Clearly Kachhi Mali and Baghban are all closely akin most probably the Mali is an offshoot from the Kachhi and the Baghban from the Mali The levirate exists, but is not compulsory The caste is served by Gaur and Sanadh Brahmans [2]

6. (ii) *Banmanus*

Mr Crooke described the Banmanus (which means man of the forest') as a Musahar subcaste but in Sultanpur they are now a separate and entirely distinct caste Their legendary ancestor was Sewak, an Ahir whose family save one pregnant woman, was slain

[1] I am told by the Census Superintendent of 1931 that the number of these claims on this occasion is over a hundred.

[2] Cf. also Chapter VI par 13 (ii).

in battle with another Ahir. They worship the hero Raja Bal, a Bhar King of Dalmau, who was killed by the Muhammadans, the Banmanus, however, tell another story of his death, and incidentally make him a Brahman. Raja Bal happened to blow his horn near the spot where some wild beast had killed a cow Some Ahirs were attracted by the sound, concluded that the dead bones were crying out against their murderer, and put the Raja to death then, finding that he was a Brahman, deified him. This legend also belongs to Ahir mythology The caste is endogamous, has the usual marriage customs, and practises the levirate. They use the Brahman only as an astrologer. Their chief occupations are making leaf platters and collecting wild honey Those who live in the jungle are said to be very shy and wild. those who have settled in villages resemble other low caste villagers [1]

7 (vi) *Bhuiyar* There are no less than three castes with this name: an aboriginal tribe in Mirzapur, an old caste, elsewhere called 'Orh', in Moradabad, and a new caste in the same district. The second of these is a functional caste which weaves coarse cloth and blankets. it has an impermanent *panchayat* and the usual customs of low caste Hindus. The third caste claims descent from one Raja Jagdeo, and say they got the name because they 'lost their land'.[2] these are chiefly cultivators, but some are weavers They have a permanent *panchayat*, and differ from the second caste in the possession of *gotras* and *gotra* exogamy, and in various customs It is possible that these second and third groups are both offshoots of the Kori caste if so, the second may be Orh Koris and the third Chamar Koris, for both Orh and Chamar are subcastes of the Kori caste Bhuiyar in that case would be a mere occupational name (it is the local term for weaver) Or the third group of Bhuiyars may be Chamars that have taken to weaving [3]

[1] Cf. also Chapter VI, par 5 (iv)
[2] *Bhuin*, land, *har*, loser
[3] Cf. also Chapter XII, par 9

8 (iv) Dhimar

The Dhimar is a Kahar occupational subcaste of fishermen which for some unknown reason has separated itself from the parent stock all over the United Provinces It has a permanent *panchayat* and in all respects resembles the Kahar caste

9. (v) Ghogar

The Ghogar is a new Muhammadan caste of converts from Hinduism which is found in Moradabad Meerut Muzaffarnagar Bijnor and Naini Tal There are various accounts of their origin They themselves claim variously Arabian and Kshatriya descent (according, no doubt, as the claimant attaches more importance to religion or to race) Another theory is that they descend from the union of a Dhinwar Khagi and a Bharbhunja woman which seems to be an etiological myth explaining their occupations of digging wells and parching grain the traditional functions of the two groups mentioned Ghogar is then explained as a corruption of *do ghar'* or two houses—an impossible derivation A less improbable story assigns them as ancestor one Ghogh Mallah—in which case Ghogar is a diminutive They practise the levirate, and permit marriage with the mother s brother s daughter but with no other cousin—which amounts to a considerable restriction on the usual Muhammadan custom They observe some Hindu festivals but are better Muhammadans than most castes of the same social standing

10. (vi) Gidhiya

The Gidhiya caste lives in Moradabad Naini Tal and Bijnor Their origin is uncertain they themselves assert sometimes that they are descended from a clan of Gujarat Rajputs called Athpahariya sometimes that they are emigrants from a place called Harewala, though they do not know where that is They have four endogamous subcastes—Athpahariya Bawariya Gandhila and Phandiya—which last they say is their caste name in their native land (i.e Gujarat or Harewala) They practise the levirate and marriage with the maternal uncle s daughter but with no other cousin A daughter

may be married into the family in which a father's sister has been married, but not a son which is only one form of the hypergamous rule They eat food cooked by any touchable Hindu they will eat any kind of flesh except pork, fowls, and beef, and even such carrion as kites They worship Kali They are traditionally bird-catchers and derive their name from the fact that they make their nets from the sinews of the kite (*gidh*). They used to be regarded as criminals, but have now settled down to cultivation. I am inclined to regard them as an offshoot of the Western Bawariyas for the following reasons —

(*a*) Gidhiya is a name, in some places, for Bawariya

(*b*) The Bawariyas also claim descent from Rajputs of Western India

(*c*) Of the four Gidhiya subcastes, one is Bawariya and another Gandhila, a vagrant tribe akin to the Bawariya

(*d*) The Bawariyas used to be bird-catchers.

(*e*) In the matter of worship, food and commensal restrictions, the Bawariyas and Gidhiyas show complete similarity, save that the former have not yet given up the use of pork and fowls

11 (vii) Kanmail

The Kanmail is a Muhammadan occupational caste, they claim to be Siddiqi Shaikhs, though they are quite clearly converts from Hinduism In all probability they are an offshoot from the Mahawat Nats, who are also called Kanmailiya like these Nats, the Kanmail is occasionally called Baid, or Bindhi—a generic nickname, indeed, for all Nats, from a peculiar method of tying the turban At all events, they have now settled down in Moradabad They have no subcastes They have a permanent *panchayat* under an elected *chaudhri*, with the usual social jurisdiction The levirate exists cousins can marry on the mother's side, but not on the father's.

The marriage customs are normal, but are rather adaptations from Hinduism than strictly Muhammadan in nature Their occupation is the decidedly unpleasant one of ear-cleaning

12 (viii) Kayastha-Darzi

The Kayastha Darzi is a new caste, found in Gorakhpur Etah and Moradabad In Gorakhpur they claim to be Srivastava, in Etah and Moradabad to be Saksena Kayasthas The latter possess *gotras* and have published a monograph on their ethnology They possess a *panchayat* and tolerate but do not approve of, the levirate In both these respects they differ from ordinary Kayasthas indeed these facts (coupled with the existence of the monograph mentioned, for such monographs are usually produced by castes that are endeavouring to rise in the social scale) suggest that instead of being Kayasthas who have taken to the trade of the Darzi they may be Darzis who are claiming rank as Kayasthas Locally however the opposite view is held

13 (ix) Kayastha Sendurıya

The Kayastha-Sendurıya exists only in Gorakhpur and is in all respects similar to the Kayastha Darzi of that district

14 (x) Phansiya

The Phansiya caste is an offshoot of the Pasi tribe, which resides in Moradabad Bareilly and Rampur State They themselves claim kinship with the Bhils: and the claim is possibly correct, for one of the Pasi subcastes in Moradabad and the neighbouring district of Budaun is Bhil They also seem to be akin to Aheriyas and Baheliyas, which also are Pasi subcastes in this tract Formerly they were hunters and fowlers like their relations: but they are now cultivators and fruit sellers The levirate exists, and the practice of marrying outside the village is strictly followed They imitate the food restrictions of higher castes and are served by Gaur Brahmans The caste affords a typical example of a rise in the social scale due to adopting a clean profession it is also an instance of secession due to increased prosperity

15 (xi) *Sainthwar*

The Sainthwar was formerly a Kurmi subcaste, but was classed as a separate caste in 1911. The chief member of it is the Raja of Padrauna in Gorakhpur and the separation is principally due to the rise of his family to prominence There is a legendary connexion between the Sainthwars and the Bisen Rajputs. The traditional ancestor of the latter was Mayur Bhatta the Sainthwars, or at all events the Mal section of that caste, claim to be descended from the union of this prince and a concubine, who, according to the Bisens' own tradition, was a Kurmi woman It should be mentioned that all Kurmis claim such descent, though the Sainthwars do not admit their claim, which, considering the widespread nature of the Kurmi caste, is prima facie improbable Sainthwars do not allow widow marriage, but this is more probably the result of the fission than its cause

16 (xii) *Singhariya*

The only caste which has ever possessed a subcaste called Singhariya is the Kahar In Moradabad, however, the Singhariyas claim descent from certain members of four high Rajput clans, who took to the occupation of growing ground-nuts, and they deny that there is any connexion with Kahars. This claim is certainly baseless, and their customs are not such as a Rajput offshoot would be likely to adopt They have, for instance, a permanent *panchayat* with a permanent elected *chaudhri*: very important matters are referred to a caste *panchayat* of *chaudhris* which meets on the occasion of a fair at Kashipur in the Naini Tal district They have the levirate custom and prohibit marriage in the lines of all four grandparents

17 *Fresh information about old castes*

(1) *Bharbhunja; Halwai; Kandu* The Bharbhunja, Halwai and Kandu castes are closely akin, though the precise nature of their kinship is uncertain All three claim to be Madhesiya Vaisyas and certainly all three have Madhesiya subcastes[1] Mr Sherring calls Kandu a subcaste of Bharbhunja Sir

[1] Cf. above, par 4

There are, secondly, other Chauhans, who, though they are indubitably of Rajput descent, are of much lower rank. To account for this loss of status they tell two stories. One is to the effect that in 1488, on the invitation of a *sadhu* who had been persecuted by a Muhammadan governor, they invaded the country, conquered the oppressor, and then settled down on the scene of their victory, losing status as a consequence. The other story alleges that they lost status because they crossed the Indus in 1586 with Maharaja Man Singh: the cause of the loss of status in both cases would be the same, namely, the change of home.[1] These Chauhans are divided into two endogamous sections—Chaudhri and Bar (or Padhan), which were originally exogamous, for Chaudhris used to take wives from, though they refused to give wives to, the Bars. The cause of this change was possibly that the Chaudhris were rich and orthodox, whilst the Bars were poor and practised widow marriage. At all events, an attempt made to effect a reconciliation at a joint *panchayat* failed, and as the Chaudhris insisted on treating the Bars as their inferiors for the purpose of marriage, whilst the Bars would not deal with them on such terms, the two sections remain endogamous. Both sections have lost further prestige because they do not wear the sacred thread, and eat *kachcha* food in the fields instead of in the privacy of the *chauka* at home: whilst it is said that in Moradabad the Chaudhris also practise widow marriage.

Thirdly, there is a Chauhan subcaste of the Khagi caste. This suggests a connexion between the true Chauhans and the Khagis: the Chauhan Khagis are probably descendants of Khagi servants of the true Chauhans.

Fourthly, there is a separate caste called Khagi-Chauhan. They claim to be true Chauhans, who lost status at a very early date because they adopted the practice of widow marriage. The cause would certainly suffice to

[1] Another instance of loss of status connected with a change of home is that of the Sarwariya Brahmans, outcasted by the Kanaujiyas because they crossed the Sarju to perform the *yagna* ceremony for Rama after he killed Rawan.

produce the effect and the affiliation of these outcaste Chauhans to the Khagis might be the result of the connexion between them mentioned above But the claim is probably bad for these Khagi-Chauhans have other customs which are characteristic of low castes—for instance the levirate and a permanent *panchayat*—whilst in features they are said to resemble Chamars rather than Rajputs [1] Still it is a curious fact that the Bar-Chauhans are beginning to take their daughters as wives, which implies that they at all events believe in their Chauhan descent

What with (1) true Chauhans who bear the title of Chaudhri (2) degraded Chauhans one of whose subcastes is Chaudhri (3) Khagi-Chauhans and (4) Chauhan Khagis, there is scope for confusion

21 (v) *Chik* In Cawnpore and elsewhere the Chik disclaims any connexion with the Khatik and the Khatik with him This is contrary to Mr Crooke s view in one place he makes Chik a Khatik subcaste in another he makes Khatik a Chik or Qassab subcaste [2] Nor is Baqarqassab a mere variant for Chik it is an entirely distinct Muhammadan group also known as Turkiya whilst Chiks are all Hindus The Chik has a permanent *panchayat* there are seven exogamous *gotras* but no endogamous sections

22 (vi) *Dakaut or Joshi* The true name of the Joshi caste in the plains is Jotishi or Jyotishi Brahmans—i e Brahmans learned in astrology Dakaut is a nickname used in Bijnor only due to the fact that some of them accept offerings made to the idol of Sani (Saturn) in Dakaur near Bombay They have the custom of levirate and widow marriage these, and the presence of a remarkably well organized *panchayat* make it improbable that they are true Brahmans

[1] There is a local proverb *Chauhan aur Chamar ki ek ras* which means Chauhan and Chamar have the same horoscope This may mean that they have the same characteristics; but more probably it is merely similar to the proverb the rain falls alike on the just and the unjust

[2] *Tribes and Castes of the N W P and Oudh* Vol III, p. 258, and Vol. IV p. 190.

The older and more common spelling was Jhijhotiya, which agrees with none of the usual derivations, though it could be referred to Jejaka Dhukti, a name used in inscriptions for parts of Bundelkhand The name given in the Vishnu Dharma Purana to the country between the Vindhyas, Jumna, and Narbada is, however, Judhdesh, which is the tract where Jujhotiyas are mainly found. and obviously it supports the spelling Jujhotiya The Jujhotiyas themselves, however, met some years ago to discuss caste origins, and accepted a theory that they were named after one Jujhar Singh, a ruler of remote antiquity who settled in Bundelkhand, and finding no Brahmans there, invited Kanaujiyas to cross the Jumna, whose name he then changed to Jujhotiya This legend may conceal a real fission from the Kanaujiyas due to a change of home But the Jujhotiyas probably had ulterior motives for accepting this theory for it enabled them both to claim Kanaujiya origin, and also to pay a compliment to the ruler of a considerable State in Bundelkhand whose name happened to be Jujhar Singh They are generally regarded as similar but inferior to Kanaujiyas they will eat their *pakka* food, but Kanaujiyas do not return the compliment

23 *(vii) Jujhotiya Brahman*

A good deal of information has been given elsewhere about the Karwal caste[1] Other quaint customs are described here They will eat goat, sheep, pig, fowls, various kinds of game birds, porcupines and lizards They will eat food of all kinds cooked by all castes save the Chamar, Bhangi, Dhobi, Dom, Kori, and Dhanuk, which are also the castes from which they may not take wives They have customs of their own both at birth and at death At birth, they bury the umbilical cord and placenta with a scorpion's sting, the intestines of a porcupine, and some liquor, which are believed to preserve the babe respectively

24 *(viii) Karwal*

[1] Chapter IX, par 9

against feeling a scorpion's sting an excessive secretion of bile colds, and ill luck generally Liquor is drunk at the usual feasts on the sixth and twelfth days after birth but women get none, because it would be too expensive to provide it for them At death they distinguish between *kachcha* and *pakka* rites, so called from the nature of the food given at the funeral feast The *pakka* funeral is that of a person who has had smallpox (or been vaccinated) the body if that of a man, is wrapped in a new loin cloth and turban if that of a woman in a new skirt, bodice and veil with a winding sheet in both cases whilst a comb and needle are also buried with a woman for a woman's toilet is no trifling matter as a Karwal said when giving this information A *pakka* corpse is cremated the ashes are collected for interment in the tribal burial place, which they visit once a year for the purpose The *kachcha* funeral is used for all other purposes the corpse is buried in the clothes worn at death

5. (ix) *Kayastha*

The Kayastha caste as a whole, stands in high repute But the numerous class of *patwaris* (keepers of the village revenue records) consists almost entirely of Kayasthas and as the *patwari* has a bad name for chicanery the better class Kayasthas affect to despise this occupation Some years ago many Srivastava families, especially in Oudh refused to have any relations whether connubial or commensal with *patwari* families and the Kayastha *sabha* had some difficulty in preventing the consequent formation of a *patwari* sub-caste This is an excellent instance of how an occupation regarded as degrading can lead to secession from a caste and the formation of a new caste

16. ( ) *Kayastha-Mochi*

According to Mr Crooke this group has 'the same customs as ordinary Kayasthas and inter marries with them In Cawnpore at all events, the former part of this statement is only partially true The rural Kayastha-Mochis possess a *panchayat* which meets once a year in Charkhari State under the presidency of

a permanent headman, called *sarmaur* (crowned head), whilst in the city it is of the ordinary permanent type, though dignified by the name of *sabha*. ordinary Kayasthas have only an impermanent *panchayat* (if they have that for much of their business is done by their caste *sabha*). Kayastha-Mochis, moreover, have the levirate custom, which no true Kayastha permits. The latter part of the statement, in the same locality, is entirely incorrect. Kayastha-Mochis admit that they have neither connubial nor commensal relations with the Kayasthas.

27. (xi) *Khumra*

Mr Crooke said little about the Khumra, and in 1901, it was classed under Raj. The Khumras allege that they come from Kafa in Arabia and are descended from one Kamraha, a disciple of Ali, whom Ali carried off in his waistband (*Kamarband*) as a boy—whence the name.[1] They have no endogamous subcastes and practise the levirate without the usual restriction against marrying the husband's elder brother: their domestic customs are the usual mixture of Hindu and Muhammadan.

28. (xii) *Kuta Banjara*

The Kuta-Banjara caste appears to be the same as Mr Crooke's Dhankuta Banjara.[2] They assert that they are of Rajput descent and settled in Moradabad and the Tarai from Delhi. They have an impermanent *panchayat*, and the levirate is permitted but not compulsory. They have eight exogamous sections of which three are Rajput (Gahlot, Chauhan, and Panwar). They are carriers and cultivators.

29. (xiii) *Kuta-Mali*

The Kuta-Malis say that their original home was Jigangarh in Muttra. When the Muhammadans sacked that place, they forcibly converted most of its Rajput inhabitants to Islam and they became the Lalkhanis: the Kuta-Malis are the descendants of the

[1] The fact that '*Kamar*' is not an Arabic word rather spoils the story.

[2] *Tribes and Castes of the N.-W. P. and Oudh*, Vol. I, p. 157.

few who escaped The refugees took shelter in a faqir s garden who saved them from their pursuers by calling them his gardeners in memory of which they were called Malis When they took to pounding grain they became known as Kuta-Malis They have also a traditional connexion with Delhi where there are some forty villages of them in the United Provinces they are found in Moradabad Bareilly Bijnor Naini Tal and Rampur State They practise the levirate, but their other customs are normal They are a thrifty hardworking caste as two proverbs show One is *Kuta Mali kabhi na baitha khali*'— A Kuta-Mali is never idle the other *Jahan Kuta Mali wahan uski gharwali* — Where the Kuta Mali is, his wife is also which refers to the fact that they pound and sift grain together

The Lodhas in Bundelkhand have long claimed to be of Rajput descent One of their
30. (xiv) *Lodhas* subcastes the Mahalodhis which is found only in that region, have customs much more orthodox than other subcastes they do not permit widow marriage, have no permanent *panchayat* and are regarded by other subcastes as of higher rank than themselves These facts do not of course necessarily support their claim they may as well be the result of the claim

There is a Vaisya caste called Mahajan It is also a name appropriated by Kalwars
31 (xv) *Mahajan* who have given up dealing in liquor Many prosperous Kalwars, whether they sell liquor or not, are now endeavouring to cut themselves off from their own caste, and to form a new caste under this name; they refuse to intermarry with ordinary Kalwars, who however do not recognize the distinction Since there is a Vaisya Mahajan this is probably an attempt to enter the ranks of the twice born by a backdoor

The Manihar Churihar and Lakhera are generally regarded as three distinct castes In
32 (xvi) *Manihar* Cawnpore, however, they are said to form a single caste with none but a functional difference between them the Manihar

sells, the Churihar makes, glass bangles, whilst the Lakhera makes *lac* bangles.

33 (xvii) *Mina* — Mina is generally regarded as a mere variant for Meo But in Moradabad they disclaim any connexion. They say that Jaipur is their ancestral home they have four exogamous sections, two of which (Gahlot and Amethi) ally them to the Rajputs, whilst a third (Lalsoti) allies them to Jaipur, as Lalsot is a village in that State. They have a permanent *sarpanch*, known as *muqaddam*, and selected *panches*.

34 (xviii) *Ramaiya* — In Bijnor, the Ramaiya alleges that he originally came from Sankaldip 'beyond' Sangla (Colombo) · some Ramaiyas even say that they have visited their ancestral home From Sankaldip the caste migrated to Bijnor, via Jaipur and the Punjab The geography leaves something to be desired, as there is not very much land 'beyond' Colombo, but Sankaldip is usually located near Kabul, so possibly some other 'Sangla' is meant

35 (xix) *Thakur-Arakh* — Two or three families were found in a village in Cawnpore bearing the name Thakur-Arakh, obviously the descendants of a mixed union These unfortunates are compelled to marry amongst themselves

36 (xx) *Turaiha and Bhangi* — At no time has there been much cohesion in the Bhangi caste, and several authorities have thought it probable that the various subcastes would separate, all the more so that, as Mr Crooke proves, they were clearly of different origin, and had no bond of union save that of common occupation. This expectation has been fulfilled All subcastes, with one accord and everywhere, state that there is not now, and never has been, such a thing as a Bhangi caste Hela, Lal Begi, Balmiki, Shaikh-Mehtar are the principal castes of scavengers, but the fission has been complete Even such a small group as the Turaiha, which is found in Unao and Cawnpore, claims complete independence

37 (xxi) Tyar

Lord Avebury in his work *The Origin of Civilisation* quoting from a book entitled *The People of India* by Messrs Watson and Kaye, mentions the Teehurs of Oudh as possessing the custom of communistic marriage There are, or were, two groups of the name in the United Provinces one a Rajput clan now extinct, which gave its name to a tract (*tappa*) called Tyar[1] in the Oudh district of Sultanpur and one a section of the Mallah caste which is resident in the eastern districts and Bengal The former of these certainly never possessed such a custom The latter was a group of low caste boatmen and fishermen and the statement of Messrs Watson and Kaye must have referred to them though in that case they mistook the locality in which they lived But so far as is known that statement was wrong of them too It is conceivable that, in a community where men are compelled by their profession to leave their wives for long periods marriage restrictions may become somewhat lax but between that, and so primitive a system as communistic marriage, there is a very great difference Nor indeed, save this very statement is there any ground for supposing that these eastern Tyars were guilty of such laxity They too are now extinct, so far as the United Provinces are concerned[2] As a result of this unfounded imputation they have long suffered from an undesirable notoriety and these facts are mentioned with the object of correcting a mistake and doing the Tyars a somewhat belated justice

[1] Of which an early settlement officer wrote that it was like Niobe, all Tyars

[2] Only 135 were found at the Census of 1901 : none at all in 1911

Principal authority —*Census Report U P 1911*

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XI

Castes that claim higher status than that usually accorded to them

Caste	*Name claimed* 1911	*Name claimed* 1921	*Remarks*
Bhuinhar	Bhuinhar Brahman	Bhuinhar Brahman	Recognized in 1911
Lohar	Visvakarmabansi Brahman	Dhiman Brahman	—
Barhai Dhiman	Visvakarmabansi Brahman	Dhiman Brahman	—
Belwar	Belwar Brahman Sanadh	Belwar Brahman Sanadh	Recognized in 1911
Taga	Brahman	Kokas Panchal Brahman	Old claim
Bhat	Brahmbhatt	Brahmbhatt	—
Barhai	—	Maithila Brahman	Some 75 families in Aligarh
Sonar, Mair	Mair Kshatriya	Mair Rajput	—
Sonar, Tank	Tank Kshatriya	—	—
Sonar, other	—	Mathur Rajput	—
Kurmi	Kurmi Kshatriya	Kurmi Kshatriya	—
Kayastha	Chitraguptabansi Kshatriya	—	—
Gadariya	Kshatriya	Pali Rajput	—
Karnwaj	Kshatriya	—	—
Khattri	Kshatriya	Kshatriya	Partly admitted in 1901
Kachhi	—	Kachhwaha Rajput	—
Kahar, Rawani	—	Chandrabansi Kshatriya	—
Tamboli	—	Nagbansi Kshatriya	—
Lodha	—	Lodhi Rajput	—
Ahir	—	Ahir Kshatriya	—
Khangar	—	Khangar Rajput	—
Kalwar	Batham Vaisya	Batham Vaisya	—
Kandu	Madhesiya Vaisya	—	—
Halwai	Madhesiya Vaisya	(Yogya Saini Vaisya (Kanya Kubja Vaisya	

The claims of 1911 are discussed in general terms in the text. I append explanatory notes where necessary

Bhuinhar There can be little doubt of the claim of this caste to Brahmanical origin. They have ancient legends connecting them with that caste; they are often called *Zamindar* or *Grihasht* Brahmans (landowning or family Brahmans); they have Brahmanical *gotras*, wear the Brahmanical sacred thread (which is longer than that of other twice born castes), and are addressed as Brahmans.

Lohar and *Barhai*. Both castes have sections that claim Brahmanical descent, wear the Brahmanical thread, and have Brahman *gotras*. Visvakarma is their reputed ancestor and present deity—the Vulcan of the Hindu mythology

Taga. What is meant by Kokas Panchal Brahman, I cannot say There is a Barai and Barhai sept called Kokas, whilst Panchala was the name of a northern Indian tribe. The Taga mythology usually affiliates them to the Gaur Brahman.

Sonar The claim of Mair and Tank Sonars is of old standing in the Punjab (1901). The claim to be Mathur Rajputs (i e. Rajputs from Muttra) is new and unintelligible.

Gadariya. This caste has a number of Kshatriya sections; Pali is a Punjab caste name for cattleherd.

Kachhi. It seems clear that the Kachhis had some sort of connexion with the Kachhwaha Rajputs, for there is a Kachhwaha subcaste of Kachhis all over the province. It does not of course follow that there is any connexion by blood.

Kahar Rawani R wani is one of the Kahar subcastes. How it supports its claim to Kshatriya birth is a mystery

Tamboli. This caste, and the allied Barai, possess a number of subcastes with Rajput names, of which Nagbansi is one.

Lodha. The claim to be a Lodhi Rajput (a central India caste) is an old one. It seems to be confined to Bundelkhand.

Ahir Ahirs have long claimed Kshatriya descent and they have undoubtedly been rulers of kingdoms in the past. The connexion would probably be through the J don or Jadubansi clan of Rajputs; there is large Ahir section f the same name.

Khangar The Khangar claim to Rajput lineage is supported by many legends. There is undoubtedly some connexion between the two; but prima facie it is much more likely that the Khangar should become a Rajput, than that a Rajput should become a Khangar

Kalwar Kandu and *Halwai*. The claim is old, as is the Kalwar subcaste Batham. It has always been held that the Kalwar like the Kandu and Halwai had a colourable right to be classed as V isyas. There are Madhesiya and Kanaujiya (Kanya Kubja) subcastes in both the Halwai and Kandu castes; but Yogya Saini is a name that I cannot trace.

CHAPTER XII

CASTE IN RELATION TO OCCUPATION

1 Occupation and society

At all times and in all countries the social status of an individual has been affected and even determined by the nature of the occupation from which he derives his livelihood Certain occupations and professions are regarded as suitable, others as unsuitable to the rank of life in which he is born, and should he follow one of the latter, then the esteem in which he is held is diminished, and he 'loses caste' For instance, in England during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the only careers considered fit for a gentleman were landholding, politics, the army, and to a certain extent, the navy, the church, and the law. The mid-Victorians added to this list other professions regarded as 'learned'—medicine and education, but it was not till more recent times that the adoption of any sort of business career, except possibly banking, ceased to be regarded as involving a loss of social standing.

It is not, therefore, surprising to find that occupation has also exercised, and still exercises, a marked influence on the Hindu social system Mr Nesfield,[1] indeed, goes so far as to regard that system as based entirely on differentiation of function, which is represented as the sole cause of the origin of caste others regard it as its principal, though not its sole, cause In earlier chapters an attempt has been made to prove that these views are exaggerated None the less, it cannot be doubted or denied that the effect produced by occupation on the evolution of this system has been very great.

[1] *Brief View of the Caste System of the N-W P and Oudh* (1885)

2. Influence of occupation on early Hindu society. ( ) The Buddhist period

But though that effect has been great yet in certain, though not in essential respects, it differs from the effect produced by occupation on other social systems and to understand the nature of that effect it is necessary to re-examine briefly, and from a slightly different point of view the growth of the system as already described in an earlier chapter[1] We found there that at the dawn of history properly so called in the Buddhist period there were in existence certain social strata—Kshatriyas Vaisyas, Sudras *hina jatiyo hina-sippani* Chandala aboriginals—with the Brahmans, to whom reference will be made later These strata though more clearly defined corresponded roughly to similar social classes in modern times Kshatriyas to nobility, Vaisyas and Sudras to our upper and lower middle classes *hina jatiyo* and *hina sippani* to our labouring classes and Chandalas to the dregs of society There was also a cross-division based on occupation first the Brahmans who may perhaps be more accurately regarded as forming a learned than a purely sacerdotal class, corresponding generally to our learned professions especially the churchman the lawyer the statesman and the teacher secondly the trade guilds thirdly the low trades followed chiefly by the *hina-sippani* such as those of the barber the potter and the weaver lastly the primitive trades followed chiefly by the *hina jatiyo* such as hunting fishing herding basket making and bird-catching

The trade-guilds were no doubt mainly recruited from the Vaisya and Sudra i e from the middle classes But there was nothing more to prevent a Kshatriya from joining a guild or from becoming a Brahman than there is at the present day to prevent a peer from joining a business firm or from taking Holy Orders[2] He no doubt lost caste by so doing but so till a few years ago did his modern equivalent

[1] Chapter II, para. 4 and 5.

[2] Cf. Chapter II para. 4 and 5 for examples.

3 The influence of heredity of function and endogamy

There were, however, already two forces at work which modified the effect produced by occupation on social status whilst intensifying it The first of these was a tendency towards endogamy which arose from the social conditions of the time The second was the tendency towards heredity of function, which in all circumstances is a perfectly natural, and in a system of well-organized functional guilds, an almost inevitable, tendency. The former separated the individual who adopted a new occupation from the class to which he formerly belonged for, if the change of occupation involved a fall of status, his former associates would refuse to intermarry with him, whilst if it involved a rise of status, he would refuse to intermarry with his former associates · and in either case, he would seek for alliances in the social class which he had joined Both forces in combination also tended to separate each individual guild from all others, and from all other social groups The change of occupation, in fact, did not merely involve a change in social status or rank it definitely transferred the individual or individuals concerned from one social group to another social group And inasmuch as the function of a group was peculiar to itself and jealously reserved by each generation for the succeeding generation, the transfer once made was permanent These two forces, which were mere tendencies in the Buddhist period, grew increasingly strong with time, till at last they became fixed and immutable customs As will be shown later, they are still in operation to a certain extent.

4 (b) The period of Manu

Some nine centuries later we are presented with another account of the social system—the famous account of Manu[1] Much had occurred in the interval hordes of foreign invaders, one after the other, had swarmed into India, to modify, and ultimately to be absorbed into, the existing social system These

[1] Chapter II, par 8 *et sqq*

invasions had strengthened the prevailing tendency towards endogamy: and in the words of a certain inscription the four castes had been mixed[1] We now find a social system which is mainly based on differentiation of occupation The Brahmans (as of old form the sacerdotal and learned caste the occupation of the Kshatriyas is ruling and fighting—public service generally The Vaisyas and Sudras are described respectively as traders and industrialists and labourers and menials The *varnasankaras* are almost all occupational groups Remain the *vratyas* and *vrisalas*—the descendants of the foreign invaders pseudo-Hindus and in the latter case pseudo-Kshatriyas The various groups are all subject to a greater or less degree, to the law of endogamy not yet as rigid as it subsequently became it is none the less a law to which the possible exceptions are carefully defined and regulated

5 *Agriculture*

Before we pass on to examine the relations of caste and occupation in more modern times, we may pause to note one very striking omission in these two descriptions of Hindu society India is, and always has been pre eminently an agricultural country Yet in neither of these two descriptions is any prominence given to even if there is any mention of either land-owning or agricultural castes or the corresponding occupations, though a large part of the population must then as now have consisted of cultivators and their importance in the social system must have been great It is left for a foreign observer Megasthenes to put them in their proper place[2] He mentions the husbandmen as the second of his seven groups he tells us that they formed the bulk of the population (as they do still) and were exempt from military service (which if true, proves that they were regarded as a class of high importance) We may possibly arrive at an explanation of this omission by examining present conditions Firstly whereas each

[1] Chapter II par 7 the date is 126 A.D.
[2] Chapter II par 6.

main trade is, or till quite recently was, followed by a single caste, agriculture is the traditional occupation of a large number of castes Secondly, these castes are of varied origin, the Kurmi, for instance, claims Kshatriya descent, the Bhar, Jat, Gujar, and Lodha probably descend from aboriginal or invading tribes Thirdly, agriculture is traditionally associated with castes which also have other traditional occupations for instance, the Rajput, who represents the Kshatriya, the Bhuinhar and Taga, who claim Brahman origin, are also 'traditionally' landholders These facts suggest that agriculture at all times was followed by groups of such diverse origin and social rank that it was impossible for them to form anything of the nature of an agricultural 'guild', or to unite into a single caste Though it is possible that the Vedic Dasyu was not an agriculturist, yet undoubtedly every invading tribe in turn, from the Arya onwards, must have settled on the lands that it conquered, and taken to agriculture In other words agriculture was an occupation too widespread to produce any effect on the evolution of the social system—except in so far as it must always have been an occupation held in some esteem (as is proved by Megasthenes' statement of the husbandmen's special privileges), and its adoption by persons who followed other trades must have tended to improve their social status

6 The relation of caste and occupation in modern times

At the present day, it is possible to assign to every caste, with few exceptions,[1] an occupation, or group of allied occupations, with which it is, or till relatively recent times has been, intimately associated. In the case of functional castes the asso-

[1] These are —

(i) the hill-Dom, which is a race rather than a caste, or even a tribe, though its sections are functional,

(ii) the four original Muhammadan tribes (Mughal, Pathan, Shaikh, Saiyid),

(iii) the sectarian castes (though the Sadh has acquired a special trade of his own, viz the manufacture of printed cottons)

The Dom in the plains, though classed with agricultural labourers, follows all sorts of occupations of a humble nature

ciation is traditional preceding and actually causing their formation In the case of other castes, the association though merely incidental (or even accidental) is quite as ancient as it is in the case of functional castes The modern Ahirs, for instance, whose traditional occupation is cattle-keeping descend from the Abhiras, a pastoral tribe which dates back at least as far as the beginning of the Christian era The connexion of most agricultural castes with agriculture must also date back to the birth of the caste itself

7 *Classification of castes by occupation*

In Appendix I to this chapter an attempt has been made to classify castes according to their traditional occupations There are twelve main groups but where further differentiation is possible the special function is mentioned Some explanatory remarks follow —

(i) Agriculture —This is a large and very ill-defined group It is impossible to divide it with any accuracy even into sections as large as landholders and cultivators —the result partly of the system of land tenures, partly of the joint family system In practice there are few landholders who do not themselves cultivate some part of their land there are many cultivators who own a little land themselves As a result of their social position it is possible to class Bhuinhars, Rajputs, Sainthwars and Tagas as traditionally landholders but further specialization would lead to inaccuracy The only other castes to whom special functions can be assigned are some few who are growers of particular crops but even in these cases it does not follow either that they grow nothing else, or that nobody else grows their speciality,

(ii) Labourers and village menials —This group is of a vaguer nature still a traditional special function exists only in the case of the Beldar Luniya and Musahar The rest are tribal castes, who do all sorts of odd jobs about the village

[1] It was done in the census of 1911 but with unsatisfactory results, and for special reasons. See *Census Report U P* 1911 Chapter XII

(iii) Pastoral occupations —The traditional connexion with the occupation in this small group is sufficiently close

(iv) Learned professions —Special functions exist in all the cases in this group, which is one of functional castes in the strict sense

(v) Carrying and peddling —The special function exists here in all cases the Banjara has several which are followed by various subcastes

(vi) Hunting —Little specialization is possible here Both Banmanus and Gidhiya are castes discovered in 1911 of the rest, all but the Aheriya and Baheliya are hunters principally because they are aboriginal tribes living in or near the jungles

(vii) Boating and fishing —The three castes in this group were probably one in origin

(viii) Trade and industry, unspecified —The Bhatiya, Dhusar-Bhargava, and Khattri are Brahmans or Kshatriyas who have taken to trade The rest represent the 'Baniya' of early classifications, but claim correctly to descend from the old Vaisyas They are true functional castes, but of a particular kind in that their traditional function is unusually indefinite

(ix) Trade and industry specified and

(x) Trade in articles of food and drink —These groups are all purely functional castes

(xi) Singers, dancers, musicians, buffoons, acrobats —This is a group of performers of all kinds The Nat has many occupations [1] but the special functions of the rest can be defined with some accuracy

(xii) Beggars and criminals —This is a group of all sorts of 'gipsy' criminals They specialize to a certain extent, in so far as each practises his own particular type of crime [2]

8 Effect of a change of occupation

As civilization progresses, the needs of the community grow more numerous and more complex, and the occupations which supply those needs have to adapt themselves to changing conditions The more

[1] See Chapter IX, par 3 (ii)
[2] Ibid, *passim*

primitive die out fresh trades and industries spring up to supply new demands, and differentiation or specialization of processes takes place everywhere In the past, when the tendency towards heredity of function was still strong, such changes of occupation frequently perhaps generally led to changes in the constitution of the castes concerned At the present day this result is much less common As a rule there will no longer be any change in the caste as a result of a change of function unless either, *firstly* the change of function involves a further change of social status: or *secondly* the new and the traditional occupations are so different that there is no community of interests possible between their respective followers The change when it does occur takes one of the following forms —

(*a*) The new group separates from the parent stock and forms a new caste

(*b*) The new group, after separation affiliates itself to another caste

(*c*) The new group becomes a new endogamous subcaste within the caste

9. Example of changes in constitution of cast consequent on chang of occupation

(i) Formation of new caste

The following are examples of these various kinds of changes —

The Bhuinhar and Taga both claim to be Brahmans who gave up the priestly for a secular life—namely agriculture This involved social degradation, and two new castes were formed

The Singhaniyas are Kahars who deserted the traditional occupation of domestic service for the growing of water nuts in particular, and for agriculture in general

The Phansiyas are Pasis who have taken to fruit growing Inasmuch as this is a reputable occupation the change involved a rise in social status

The Dakaut astrologer and the Mahabrahman funeral priest may be of Brahmanical descent if so they became new castes as a result of adopting relatively degrading occupations

In modern times I have only met a single instance The Gual Nats formerly singers and dancers, have taken to trade and now call themselves Badi Banjaras

(iii) F rmatio f new subcastes

The Bhar separated from the Raj Bhar because he took to keeping pigs

The Adham Sudra subcaste of Ahirs was formed as a result of their taking to menial service

Many Kahar subcastes are occupational e g the Dhimar (fishermen) Mahar (women s servants) Kamkar (drawers of water), besides the Gharuk and Singhariya now castes

The Kumhar subcastes are largely occupational the Bardhiya use oxen in their work the Gadhere donkeys the Hateriya make pots by hand instead of with a wheel the Kasgar make cups and the Intpaz bricks

The Baheliya subcastes are Chiryamar and Bajdhar—fowler and falconer

The Gual Nats have divided into Gual who only allow married women to dance and sing and Kanchan who only allow unmarried girls to follow these occupations The Kalabaz are a branch of the Kanchan who have taken to tumbling

A subcaste of the Dhuniya has taken to butcher s work—the Qassaiya

The Khatiks have three occupational subcastes—Rajgar (or masons) Sombatta (or rope-makers), and Mewafarosh (or fruit sellers) A fourth is in process of formation they are Bekanwala (or pork vendors)

10. The traditional occupation i modern conditions

Under modern conditions, desertion of the traditional occupation has become much more frequent than of old and consequent changes in the caste have become much less common For instance, the spread of education has (as we have already seen) driven the Kayastha to other pursuits, partly because there is less need for the professional writer partly because he is now faced with competition in clerical work from the members of many other castes The excise restrictions of modern times have in the same

way driven Kalwars and Pasis from their traditional pursuits of distilling and toddy-drawing to all sorts of avocations Other occupations have lost their attractions the mills have reduced the profits of weaving, the Teli has lost materially by the increased use of kerosene oil, the Kahar prefers independence and agriculture to domestic service, whilst betel-growers, market-gardeners, herdsmen, boatmen, earth-workers, priests, and leather-workers have all for various reasons taken largely to cultivation Appendix II, which is compiled from the census tables of 1911, shows the extent to which the traditional occupation is followed in various castes It should be explained that the figures refer only to male workers and omit women workers and dependants, whilst all those who returned the traditional occupation as either the primary or the subsidiary occupation are shown as following it [1]

[1] In considering these figures, it is important to remember certain points —

(i) The census figures refer to the facts observed on a particular day it does not, therefore, follow that they represent the normal state of affairs For instance, the census of 1911 took place during the harvest period that would mean that many odd job labourers would actually be employed at the time as agricultural labourers and would so return themselves

(ii) Wages of all kinds, especially agricultural wages, had risen during the ten years preceding 1911 this enabled many agricultural labourers to lease fields, and consequently to return themselves as cultivators

(iii) A large number of persons who are not traditionally agriculturists own or lease a few fields and probably all those that do not, still would like to do so And in 1910 and 1911 the crops had been particularly good As a consequence, a very large number of artisans and traders of all kinds were making more, *at the time of census*, from their agricultural than from their traditional occupations, and instead of showing themselves as artisans who were also agriculturists they showed themselves as agriculturists who were also artisans By including in the Appendix all who follow the traditional occupation at all, this error has been partly corrected but inasmuch as there were six kinds of 'agricultural entry', it is obvious that some artisans may have shown themselves in two of these and omitted the artisan entry altogether

See *Census Report, U P*, 1911, pp 386-7

These figures prove the predominance of agriculture not only is the proportion of persons who follow it in the agricultural castes very high but in the non-agricultural castes also it actually exceeds the proportion of persons who follow their various traditional occupations the figures are 430 per thousand as against 422 The latter proportion exceeds 50 per cent only in two of the three trade groups If we exclude the Kalwar on whose occupation the law imposes restrictions, it just exceeds 40 per cent also in the third trade group, but in all other groups the figure never exceeds 20 per cent Of individual castes, the Baranwal shows the highest proportion whilst the Umar Agarwal Kasaundhan Bhangi and Sonar are all at 75 per cent or over the Halwai Gahoi Bharbhunja Dhobi at 60 per cent but less than 75 per cent the Nai Agrahri Barhai Kandu Julaha Teli and Kumhar at over 50 per cent but less than 60 per cent Of these the seven Baniya castes are in a particularly favourable position any trade or industry is traditional to them The settled peace introduced by the British Government with the rise in the standard of comfort, has preserved the prosperity of the Sonar s trade and he has had less reason for deserting his hereditary occupation than many others The conservatism of the Hindu in the matter of food accounts for the high figures of the Halwai and Bharbhunja The Nai barber the Barhai carpenter the Julaha weaver the Teli oil-presser and the Kumhar potter all follow trades necessary in all stages of civilization As for the Bhangi and Dhobi they pursue occupations which are not only necessary but not likely to attract competition anywhere—least of all in India At the other end of the list the Kewat, Chamar and Kalwar all show figures of under 10 per cent the dignity attaching to the name of agriculture would help to account for the first two cases, whilst the Kalwar figure has already been explained Many castes show a figure of 20 per cent or under most of these are relatively low save the Brahman Of the occupations other than the traditional occupation or agriculture that are followed by various castes little need be said Agri

culturists themselves are occasionally labourers or domestic servants Labourers and village menials have representatives in many pursuits, notably industry (skilled artisans), domestic service and 'transport'. (A good many Dhanuk women, as midwives, appeared under arts and professions in the census tables) The learned castes have members in almost every type of occupation Many 'boatmen and fishermen' are labourers, or in various industries Of the trading castes properly so called, many are in various other trades than their traditional trades, some are labourers or in 'transport'.

ii Control of the caste over professional matters

There can be little doubt that in the ancient trade-guilds all matters of a professional nature were strictly regulated by the guild authorities · that has always been the case where trade-guilds have existed, and it has been shown that the guilds of ancient India were both particularly well organized and extremely powerful They tried their own lawsuits, administered their own apprentice laws, and decided their own trade disputes At the present day, though the *panchayats* of functional castes not infrequently deal with professional matters, and when they do, their power is as great as it is in their social and domestic jurisdiction, yet the instances of interference are relatively few, and most functional castes seem to leave such matters alone altogether The reason is no doubt the fact, made plain in the preceding paragraph, that adherence to hereditary occupation is no longer compulsory, or even rigid Some castes, it is true, refuse to allow their members to adopt certain processes or certain methods of work. The Agrahri, for instance, separated from the Agarwal because the former section allows its women to serve in their shops The Khatik similarly objects to his women peddling fruit the Musahar despises a section known as Dolkarha because they carry palanquins But these are not so much instances of interference in professional matters because they are professional, as because they involve social degradation they are cases pertaining to the *panchayat's* domestic rather than its occupational jurisdiction

12 *The practice of jajmani*

There is, however one professional custom regarding which all castes which possess it are extremely particular, namely the custom expressed in the word *jajmani*' Literally the word *jajman* means he who gives the sacrifice, i e the person who employs a priest to carry out a sacrifice for him but it is now extended to include a client of any kind The *jajmans* of a Brahman priest are his parishioners whose domestic rites at birth initiation and marriage it is his duty and right, to superintend Similarly Chamars Doms, Dafalis, Bhats Nais, Bhangis, Barhais and Lohars all have their *jajmani* or clientèle, from whom they receive fixed dues in return for regular service The Chamar s clients are those from whom he receives dead cattle and to whom he supplies shoes and other articles of leather The Dom s and Dafali s *jajmanis* are begging beats the Dom has also the right to steal, the Dafali to exorcise evil spirits within his beat The Nai has regular clients whom he shaves, and for whom he acts as matchmaker he also performs their minor surgical operations such as drawing teeth and lancing boils Barhais and Lohars make or mend the ploughs, harrows and other implements of a fixed circle Bhats are perambulating genealogists for their clients, visiting them every two or three years and bringing their family trees up to date These *jajmanis* are valuable sources of income, both heritable and transferable they are strictly demarcated, and the crime of poaching on a fellow casteman s *jajmani* is bitterly resented A Dom it is said would not hesitate to hand over to the police such a poacher It should be mentioned that in some castes the women have their own *jajmani* the Dhanuk s and Chamar s wives are both hereditary midwives, and the Nai s wife is the hereditary monthly nurse [1]

[1] A synonym for *jajmanis* is *brit* meaning (caste) dues *Purohiti* is the Brahman s *brit*'

13 The boycott

Since the occupational castes work for members of other castes, it follows that in many trade disputes one of the parties is not amenable to the discipline of the *panchayat* In such a case the means used to bring him to reason is the boycott the *panchayat* would forbid its subjects to work for him, and unless he succeeded in placating them, he would remain unserved Sympathetic strikes, though probably uncommon, are possible I have heard of no case in the United Provinces, but a case has been reported from Ahmedabad, in which a banker who happened to be re-roofing his house quarrelled with a confectioner, whereupon the confectioners' guild arranged with the tilemakers' guild to refuse to supply him with tiles The use of this powerful weapon is thoroughly well understood in India Every master knows, for instance, that if he dismisses a servant he runs the risk of finding nobody willing to take his place

14 Instances of the interference of panchayats with professional matters

The following cases of action taken by *panchayats* in professional disputes are of interest —

Chamar (Bahraich and Ghazipur) —

(i) Two Chamars were fined by the *panchayat* for removing dead cattle from the premises of another Chamar's clients

(ii) On a Chamar woman working as midwife for another's client, her husband was fined

(iii) To handle manure of any kind, save cowdung, involves outcasting

(Gorakhpur) A planter tried to stop cattle-poisoning by insisting that his tenants should slash the hides of all cattle that died without obvious cause The tenants were willing, but the Chamars refused to allow their women to act for them as midwives, and the practice had to be stopped

Bhangi —The Bhangi *panchayat* deals regularly with *jajmani* disputes It has more than once been able to organize an effective strike for instance, following a decision of a municipal board to sell the night-soil which had formerly been the perquisite of the scavengers, the

municipal sweepers themselves struck and were able to prevent others from replacing them and the municipal board had to make terms

Lohar (Azamgarh) —The Lohar *panchayat* fixes the rates of wages and protects its members from the com petition of newcomers An employer being dissatisfied with the work of the local Lohars, gave his work to some outsiders The two *panchayats* met and decided that the employer s grievance was real they accordingly allowed the outsiders to finish the job but they had to effect an exchange of clients—an excellent instance of the transfer ability of *jajmani*

Ghogar[1] (Moradabad) —The *panchayat* fixes the rates of wages and outcastes anybody who works at lower rates

Phansiya (Moradabad) —A Phansiya is not allowed to outbid a caste fellow for a fruit garden (Orchard-owners in India usually auction their fruit)

Mirasi[1] (Moradabad) —A dancing girl who dismisses her musicians during the marriage season is boycotted by the Mirasi *panchayat*

Julaha —The Julahas have a loom-tax which is used to fight lawsuits with professional outsiders They also possess a system of apprenticeship and collect money for caste *taziahs*[2]—just as the old trade-guilds did They fine Julahas whose dyes fade and forbid the use of aniline dyes

Barhai —The caste preserves with great care the ancestral methods of carpentry and building

Kathak —These religious troubadours carefully pre serve their ancient ballads and allow nobody to tamper with them

Darzi (Etah) —A Darzi once he has cut into a piece of cloth for an employer must be allowed to finish the job Should he return the cloth with the work unfinished in consequence of some dispute no other Darzi will be

[1] Muhammadan castes.

[2] A *taziah* is a lath and paper imitation of a tomb, carried in the Muharram procession in honour of the martyrs Hasan and Husain.

permitted to finish it, except with the leave of the original Darzi.

Bhishti[1] (Etah).—An employer who was building a house rebuked a Bhishti for unpunctuality. The Bhishti struck work, whereupon all other Bhishtis followed suit, and refused to resume work till the employer apologized.

Nai.—The Nai *panchayat* deals with *jajmani* disputes. On one occasion they boycotted dancing girls who refused to dance at a Nai's wedding.

Dhuniya[1] (Sitapur).—In this caste interlopers are outcasted.

Dhobi (Shahjahanpur).—The Dhobis of Shahjahanpur city refused to wash the Kahars' clothes in consequence of a dispute.

Murao (Fatehpur).—A Murao *panchayat* used to run a co-operative bank. If a member of the caste neglected to pay his dues to the bank, he was outcasted till he did so—an excellent instance of the adaptation of old world methods to new conditions.

The Nanbai,[1] Qassab[1] and Raj[1] all have guilds that deal with professional matters. The Raj is not a caste at all; it is an occupational group recruited from many castes. They have a system of apprenticeship; the apprentice when out of his indentures presents a turban to his master, and feeds the members with cardamoms.

Koiri.—Some twenty years ago, the Koiri opium-growers, being dissatisfied with the rates paid for opium by Government, decided at a monster *panchayat* to refuse to supply at these rates and to stop growing poppy till the rate was enhanced, as was ultimately done.

15 Summary.

An examination of these cases shows that the castes which deal most with trade questions are, for the most part, those which cling most closely to their traditional occupations—the Bhangi, the Nai, the Bhishti, the Darzi. Other functional castes seem to ignore such matters, as is natural since so many of their members are now taking to other than their traditional occupations. But as the cases of

[1] Muhammadan castes.

the Raj the Nanbai and the Qassab show, the members of an occupational group often set up a permanent agency to look after their interests, just as landholders and lawyers do on a larger scale in landowners and bar associations Should such trade groups as bakers, butchers, hackney-cab drivers or domestic servants consider that they have been subjected to oppression they can, and do take concerted action to resist it, whether the oppressor be a private person or a public body though their union in such cases is for a particular purpose and ceases so soon as that purpose is achieved But the tendency which leads to the formation of a landowners association or a *mazdur sabha* [1] is precisely the same tendency which led to the formation of the trade guilds—namely the desire of men with common interests to unite for the protection of those interests against a common aggressor Progress killed the trade-guild progress has already weakened and is slowly killing the functional caste, at all events on its purely occupational side The road lies open to trade unionism

[1] The name of the Labourers Union in Cawnpore, which has been very prominent of recent years.

Principal authorities.—*Census Report U P* 191
Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N W.P and Oudh* (1896).

APPENDIX I TO CHAPTER XII

Castes grouped according to occupation

(M after a name means Muhammadan)

Main Group	*Name of Caste*	*Special Function*
I AGRICULTURE	*Baghban*	Growing of flowers and vegetables
	Baiswar	
	Bajgi	
	Bhar	
	Bhoksa	
	Bhuinhar	Landholding
	Bind	
	Dangi	
	Gauriya	
	Gujar	
	Jat	
	Kachhi	Intensive cultivation
	Khagi	
	Khagi-Chauhan	
	Khangar	
	Kirar	
	Kisan	
	Koiri	Poppy-cultivating
	Kurmi	
	Lodha	
	Mali	Gardening
	Meo	
	Murao	
	Phansiya	
	Rajput	Landholding
	Saini	
	Sainthwar	Landholding
	Singhariya	Water-nut cultivation
	Taga	Landholding
	Tharu	
	Dogar (M)	
	Gara (M)	
	Jhojha (M)	
	Malkana (M)	
	Turk (M)	
II LABOURERS AND VILLAGE MENIALS	*Arakh*	
	Beldar	Earth work
	Dhanuk	
	Dhimar	
	Dom	

	Main Group	Name of Caste	Special Function
		Dusadh	
		Ghasiya	
		Kamkar	
		Luniya	Earth work and salt work
		Musahar	Menials
III.	PASTORAL OCCUPATIONS	*Ahar*	
		Ahir	
		Gadariya	
		Gaddi (M)	
		Ghosi (M)	
IV	LEARNED PROFESSIONS	*Bhat*	Bards and genealogists
		Brahman	Priesthood
		Dakaut	Astrology
		Kayastha	Writing
		Mahabrahman	Funeral priests
		Patari	Aboriginal priests
V	CARRYING AND PEDDLING	*Banjara*	Cattle-dealing and dealing in carried commodities trade in salt
		Kata-Banjar	(as above)
		Baidguar (M)	(as above)
		Mukeri (M)	(as above)
		Belwar	Carrying
		Ramaiya	Peddling
		Rehwari	Carrying
		Saiqalgar	Knife-grinding
		Bisati (M)	Peddling
VI	HUNTING	*Aheriya*	
		Baheliya	
		Banmanus	Collecting of honey
		Bhil	
		Bhuiyar	
		Gidhiya	Bird-catching
		Gond	
		Kanjar	
		Kol	
		Korwa	
VII	BOATING AND FISHING	*Chai*	
		Kewat	
		Mallah	
VIII	TRADE AND INDUSTRY UNSPECIFIED	*Agarwal*	
		Agrahri	
		Baranwal	
		Bhatiya	
		Dhusar Bhargava	
		Gahoi	
		Kand	
		Kasarwani	

	Main Group	Name of Caste	Special Function
		Kasaundhan	
		Khandelwal	
		Khattri	
		Maheshri	
		Oswal	
		Rastogi	
		Rauniyar	
		Umar	
IX	TRADE AND INDUSTRY SPECIFIED	*Agariya*	Iron smelting
		Barhai	Carpentry
		Balahar	Drumming
		Bansphor	Bamboo work
		Basor	do
		Bhangi	Scavenging
		Bhuiyar	Weaving
		Chamar	Leather-working
		Churihar	Glass bangle making
		Darzi	Tailoring
		Dhobi	Washing of clothes
		Dhuniya	Cotton carding, etc
		Gharuk	Domestic service (Europeans)
		Jatiya Chamar	Leather-working
		Julaha	Weaving
		Kahar	Domestic service
		Kanghigar	Comb making
		Kanmail	Ear-cleaning
		Kayastha-Darzi	Tailoring
		Kayastha-Mochi	Shoe making
		Kayastha-Sendurriya	Trade in red-lead
		Kori	Weaving
		Kumhar	Pottery
		Lohar	Blacksmiths
		Manihar	Glass work
		Mochi	Shoe-making
		Nai	Barbers
		Orh	Weaving
		Pasi	Toddy-drawing
		Sonar	Goldsmiths
		Teli	Oil-pressing
		Thathera	Brass and coppersmiths
		Turaiha	Scavenging
		Gandhi (M)	Perfume-selling
		Ghogar (M)	Well-digging
		Khumra (M)	Millstone-cutting
X	TRADE IN ARTICLES OF FOOD AND DRINK	*Barai*	Betel-selling
		Bharbhunja	Grain-parching
		Halwai	Confectionery
		Kalwar	Liquor trade
		Kayastha-Bharbhunja	Grain-parching

	Main Group	Name of Caste	Special Function
		Khatik	Grocery and chandling
		Kunjra	Greengrocery
		Kuta-Mali	Rice-pounding
		Tamboli	Betel-selling
		Bhathiyara (M)	Innkeepers
		Bhishti (M)	Water-carriers
		Iraqi (M)	Liquor trade
		Nanbai (M)	Bakers
		Qassab (M)	Butchers
XI.	Singers, Dancers, Musicians, Buffoons, Acrobats, etc.	*Kanchan*	Dancing and singing
		Kathak	Singing of religious odes
		Nat	Tumblers, acrobats, etc.
		Paturiya	Musicians
		Radha	Musicians
		Tawaif	Dancing girls
		Bhand (M)	Mimes and jesters
		Dafali (M)	Drummers and hedge priests
		Hurkiya (M)	Musicians
		Kingariya (M)	Musicians
		Mirasi (M)	Musicians
		Qalandar (M)	Training animals
XII	Begging and Crime	*Audhiya*	
		Badhik	
		Barwar	
		Bawariya	
		Beriya	
		Bhamapariya	
		Dalera	
		Faqir	Religious beggars
		Habura	
		Karwal	
		Sanaurhiya	
		Sansiya	
		Jogi-Pathan (M)	
		Rind (M)	

APPENDIX II TO CHAPTER XII

The Traditional Occupation in Sample Castes

Number per 1,000 of male workers following traditional and other occupations

Caste	Traditional Occupation	Agriculture	Other Occupation
Bhar	896	—	104
Bhuinhar	946	—	54
Gujar	949	—	51
Jat	909	—	91
Kachhi	888	—	112
Kisan	880	—	120
Koiri	950	—	50
Kurmi	935	—	65
Lodha	889	—	111
Mali	765	—	235
Murao	966	—	34
Rajput	919	—	81
Taga	932	—	68
Total Group I, Agriculture	910	—	90
Dhanuk	163	398	439
Dusadh	135	725	140
Luniya	111	806	83
Total Group II, Labourers and Village Menials	136	643	221
Ahir	112	837	51
Gadariya	288	630	82
Total Group III, Pastoral Occupations	200	733	67
Bhat	155	626	219
Brahman	114	748	138
Kayastha	337	455	208
Total Group IV, Learned Professions	202	610	188
Kewat	13	896	91
Mallah	166	664	170
Total Group VII, Boating and Fishing	90	780	130
Agarwal	779	110	111
Agrahri	585	337	78
Baranwal	797	170	25
Gahoi	642	240	118
Kandu	523	420	57
Kasaundhan	779	157	64
Umar	792	141	67
Total Group VIII, Trade and Industry unspecified	700	226	74

Caste	*Traditional Occupation*	*Agriculture*	*Other Occupation*
Barhai	531	393	76
Bhangi	767	93	140
Chamar	48	744	208
Dhobi	601	354	45
Julaha	519	309	172
Kahar	393	433	174
Kumhar	511	80	409
Lohar	418	497	85
Nai	598	3 3	89
Sonar	749	182	69
Teli	5 8	396	86
Total Group IX Trade and Industry specified	514	345	141
Barai	205	753	42
Bharbhunja	6 9	277	104
Halwai	683	133	184
Kalwar	67	539	394
Khatik	153	294	553
Tamboli	467	459	74
Total Group X, Dealers in Food and Drink	366	409	225

CHAPTER XIII

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF CASTE [1]

1 The social system and economic life

Every Hindu is a slave of custom From the cradle to the grave custom regulates his every action, almost his every movement It governs his relations alike to God and man and gives shape to his environment, whether social or religious Finally, it exercises a profound effect on his economic condition One of the chief factors which originally produced the caste system was the economic principle of the differentiation of function, in accordance with which the ancient trade guilds and their modern successors, the occupational castes, came into existence, and at the present day it is still the caste system which regulates the nature of a Hindu's occupation, the methods of his manufacture, the limits of his clientèle and the prices of his goods His marriage customs, again, lead directly to extravagant expenditure on dowries and wedding ceremonies His religion demands the punctual and accurate performance of numerous and costly rites His personal law imposes on him the duty of taking over and discharging the debts of his ancestors In fact, a large part of a Hindu's total disbursements, and a still larger part of his total debt, are the result, direct or indirect, of unavoidable social usages

'In an account of the Hindu social system, it is impossible to ignore its economic aspect, though the circumstances of different castes and classes vary so greatly that it can be described only in outline, and illustrated by specific instances'

[1] This chapter is based entirely on, and consists very largely of, quotation from the report of the United Provinces Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, of which the author was chairman His thanks are due to the Provincial Government for allowing him to use this material In subsequent footnotes, the report is quoted as 'B E C 's report'

8 *Economic condition of the peasantry*

Of the total population of the United Provinces, 76 per cent depend primarily or solely on agriculture for a living To another 2 per cent agriculture is a secondary occupation whilst yet another 11 per cent residing in the rural tracts, are indirectly dependent thereon No apology is needed therefore, for concentrating attention on the economic circumstances of the peasantry or for dismissing the urban population with a *mutatis mutandis*

The principal features of the life of a peasant can be briefly stated as follows

(1) In these provinces outside the hill tracts density is great and the pressure of man on the soil is everywhere heavy and in some places intolerable There is roughly one human being to every cultivated acre

(2) The average holding is small It has been calculated[1] that of the total number of holdings 18 per cent are sufficiently large to enable a farmer to live in reasonable comfort storing up in good years resources with which to tide over a period of distress About 30 per cent of all holdings are too small to support the cultivator and his family unless he possesses some subsidiary source of income The majority, namely 52 per cent are at or just above the economic level that is to say the cultivator who possesses such a holding can make both ends meet only in a good year and by unremitting toil For a large majority of the peasantry of this province life is a constant struggle between a crop and a crop though for an appreciable number the severity of this struggle is actually mitigated by the possession of a subsidiary source of income

(3) The province is peculiarly liable to climatic vicissitudes and peculiarly susceptible to their results Agricultural prosperity seldom remains unbroken for long Agrarian calamities are rarely sufficiently widespread to affect the entire province at once allowing for this fact it can be said that in any given part of the pro-

[1] B.E.C. report, Vol. I p. 99, par 192.

vince out of every fifteen years, three are bad and one indifferent

(4) On the other hand, during the last 30 years and more 'the maintenance of law and order, the defining and recording of rights in land, the continuous reduction in the proportion borne by the land revenue demand to the produce, the rise in the value of that produce and the growth of transferable rights in land have all contributed to enhance the credit of the landholder'[1] And the causes which have enhanced the cultivator's credit have also enhanced his material prosperity, a fact to which the quinquennial cattle census returns bear evidence There has been a progressive increase in the number and value of the peasant's possessions, such as cattle and other animals, ploughs and carts Another proof lies in the spread of moneylending as a subsidiary occupation amongst cultivators, nearly 40 per cent of the agricultural debt of the province was financed by landlords and nearly 14 per cent by tenants[2]

(5) But whilst his credit has been increasing, the cultivator remains not only illiterate but in the broadest sense uneducated Not only is he unable to keep accounts, but he does not understand the advantage of keeping them He does not realize the importance of equating expenditure to income, especially he allows social custom to dictate the measure of his expenditure in many directions

3 Agricultural indebtedness

Such is the economic situation of the cultivator in the United Provinces, a situation which makes indebtedness inevitable It is no doubt true that in no country in the world can agriculture entirely dispense with credit, or entirely avoid debt Agriculture is an industry like any other industrialist, the farmer who wants to increase his assets—to acquire additional land or live stock, to erect a farm building, to make a

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture*, p 432 The word 'landholder' as here used includes both cultivating landlord and tenant

[2] B E C 's report, Vol I, p 105, par 200

well or embankment—must generally borrow the fixed capital that he requires for the purpose Again, like any other industrialist, the farmer must borrow working capital to meet his current requirements indeed, his need is greater than that of most industrialists, since he must spend money for months on end before he receives any return It is only a wealthy farmer who can work without incurring debt and in any country wealthy farmers are rare Agricultural debt in short is no more deplorable than any other kind of productive debt On the contrary except in the most favourable circumstances, it is in every country inevitable and India forms no exception to this general rule But the incurring of debt is one thing indebtedness is another It is not the borrowing of money that brings economic misery in its train but failure to repay the money borrowed It is in this respect that the Indian farmer differs from farmers in other countries To him repayment of debt is peculiarly difficult and it is peculiarly difficult because so much of it is unproductive Indeed a large proportion of the Indian agriculturist s debt is not agricultural at all Amongst the Indian peasantry the most common objects of borrowing are

(1) the purchase of seed plough cattle and milch cattle, and the payment of labourers wages

(2) the purchase of food cloth and other domestic necessities

(3) the payment of land revenue or rent and

(4) the financing of social and religious functions or ceremonies repayment of ancestral debt and more generally the maintenance of the debtor s social status It has been calculated that about 36 per cent of the total debt of agriculturists in the United Provinces is due to the fourth class of objects, in other words to social and religious custom[1] And though this figure relates only to the peasantry the customs which produce it are common to the entire population whether rural or urban

[1] B.E.C. s report, V 1 I p. 84, par 168.

Custom—social, religious, and legal—impinges on the economic life of the peasant at five different points

4 *Various economic effects of social custom*

(1) Expenditure on marriages and other ceremonies,
(2) restrictions on trade and industry,
(3) caste penalties,
(4) repayment of ancestral debt,
(5) the maintenance of social prestige

5 *(1) Expenditure on marriages and other social ceremonies*
(a) Marriage

As we have seen in an earlier chapter,[1] marriage is a religious duty which the Hindu owes not only to himself but to his ancestors and his descendants, and as the normal form of marriage amongst Hindus is marriage by purchase, some measure of expenditure thereon is inevitable The purchase may take the form either of a dowry or a bride price Dowries are usual amongst castes of good social standing and, though not as high as they are in some other parts of India, are sufficiently extravagant Bride prices are generally fixed by caste custom, and are sometimes so small that they obviously date back to a time when the purchasing power of money was much greater than it is now[2] Where the amount *is not customarily fixed, its size depends on the circum-*stances of the bridegroom and his family Apart from dowry or bride price, however, there is always expenditure on the ceremony itself, which is often grossly wasteful Amongst all castes of good status, the burden of it falls on the father of the bride Apart from the dowry proper, he must provide the girl with ornaments, clothing and household utensils He must entertain the bridegroom's party for several days, he must fee the officiating priests, he must feast the assembled brethren and Brahmans As the result of the custom of hypergamy, the bride is generally of lower social position than the bridegroom, with the result that the bride's family, in an attempt to live up to the bridegroom's position, spend much larger

[1] See Chapter III, par 2
[2] See Chapter IV, pars 14 and 15

sums on the wedding than they can afford The groom on his side must purchase suitable presents for the bride, and suitable wedding garments for himself and his suite but as a rule the dowry more than covers his expenditure Amongst low castes on the other hand two customs are prevalent which reduce the burden by distributing it Firstly wherever the dowry paid by the father of the bride is replaced by a bride price paid by the father of the bridegroom that bride price is in practice always appropriated to the cost of the ceremony and secondly the brethren present at the feast are often invited to make a contribution (*takawan*) towards the wedding expenses A brass plate (*thali*) is passed round into which each guest drops a silver coin and it is said that moneylenders sometimes speculate in this *takawan* advancing a sum fixed by agreement and taking the *takawan* in full payment Amongst such a caste as the Rajput to whom display is almost a social duty the birth of a daughter means the beginning of debt The marriage expenditure of a Rajput cultivator has been estimated at Rs 600[1] but that can only be taken as a normal figure It is often much higher than that and amongst the wealthier members of that caste sometimes runs into lakhs Amongst low castes, as a rule marriage expenditure is not so serious a matter and is often repaid within a reasonable period A Kurmi wife it is said costs Rs 32 Nevertheless even the lowest castes are occasionally extravagant An instance is recorded of an Arakh in a village of Hardoi district who spent Rs 300 on the wedding of his daughter though his only sources of income were a holding of under two acres and the wages of occasional labour

6. (*b*) *Other ceremonies*

Various other ceremonies besides marriage also often lead to extravagance and debt Amongst the most common of these are the ceremonies of birth and death the *sraddha* and the *upanayana* or thread ceremony Money is also frequently borrowed to enable the

[1] B E.C. report, Vol I p. 39, par 82

devout to undertake a pilgrimage (*tirath*), and occasionally for *kathas* (sacred recitations)[1]

7 (2) *Restrictions on trade and industry*

As has been explained elsewhere, the functional castes are the direct descendants of the trade guilds of India, and many of them are still as strict in regulating trade matters as the circumstances of modern civilization will permit Their *panchayats* are often extremely powerful bodies, dealing with such matters as methods of sale or manufacture, the level of prices, and the limits of the workman's clientèle (*jajmani* or *brit*) Much has already been said regarding the circumstances of the functional castes, and repetition is unnecessary It is worth while, however, to return once more to the matter of the *jajmani* This, as has been previously explained,[2] is a circle of clients from whom the village artisan or menial receives fixed dues in return for regular services The *jajmani* is undoubtedly a valuable asset, and many a villager derives at least as much of his income from this source as from his fields The following instances show the nature and extent of such fees[3] The Lohar and the Barhai, who between them make and repair all agricultural implements, receive from each of their clients at harvest time a headload of unthreshed corn, a headload is estimated to produce about 15 seers of sifted grain After sugarcane pressing, they receive one seer of *gur*. Further, on all ceremonial occasions, they receive a present The Chamar, in his capacity as farm servant, receives the same remuneration as the Lohar or Barhai, plus a seer of grain for every three maunds of corn that he winnows, and another five seers of grain as payment for threshing After sugarcane pressing, at which he assists by feeding the fire, he receives one jar of juice, containing about five seers, from every cauldron (*kundi*) Dead cattle, of course, also

[1] Instances of debt due to all these causes are mentioned in the evidence presented to the Banking Enquiry Committee

[2] Chapter XII, par 12

[3] See B E C 's report, Vol II, p 229, being the result of enquiries made in a village in Meerut district.

belong to him The Nai, who besides serving his clients as a barber, is often their messenger in connexion with domestic ceremonies, receives one pice for every shave or hair-cut in the case of children, and two pice in the case of adults His customary remuneration, payable at harvest is six seers of grain He also assists on ceremonial occasions, as also does his wife and both receive presents whilst amongst Muhammadans, he receives not less than one rupee for every circumcision

These *jajmanis* as has already been mentioned are both heritable and transferable Figures collected by the Banking Enquiry Committee[1] showed that in three districts no less than 84 mortgages of *jajmanis* had been registered most of which belonged to Bhangis (scavengers) some belonged to Mahabrahmans (funeral priests) whilst one was the *purohiti* of a Brahman Finally it seems that in some parts of the province, notably Agra moneylenders also work on a *jajmani* system When the *sahukar* as he is there called accepts a cultivator as his client (*asami*) it becomes his duty to give advances in money for any purpose whatever and also in any kind in which he deals The client on the other hand undertakes to borrow from no one else and to repay the *sahukar's* debts out of his produce before he settles the dues of any other person

8 (5) *Caste penalties*

Chapter VI contains a full description of the working of caste *panchayats* It is common for these to impose heavy fines on an offender against social custom or to order him to give a feast, either to a specified number of Brahmans, or to the brotherhood, or to both This too has an economic effect for as the offender is invariably excommunicated till the sentence has been carried out, he must often find it necessary to borrow for the purpose Naturally villagers are reticent about debts due to this cause and in the evidence collected by the Banking Enquiry Committee only one instance of it was actually mentioned

[1] B.E.C. report, Vol. I p. 137 table 1 and p. 139, par 1

9 (4) Repayment of ancestral debt

A very common object of borrowing is for the repayment of ancestral debt It is also a type of debt from which the debtor finds it peculiarly difficult to free himself effectively, and it accordingly becomes necessary to explain with some precision the nature of the obligation which makes debt heritable The liability of one person to pay debts contracted by another depends ultimately on the principle, constantly recurring in Hindu law, that legal rights are taken subject to the discharge of moral obligations [1] These obligations may arise from three completely different sources There is, *firstly*, the religious duty of discharging a debtor from the sin of his debt, *secondly*, the heir's moral duty of paying a debt contracted by the person whose assets he has inherited, and, *thirdly*, the legal duty of paying a debt contracted by one person as the agent expressed or implied of another The first duty arises only in the case of a debtor's immediate descendants, his son and grandson The second arises in the case of any heir or successor in interest The third is an incident of the Hindu joint family system, and affects the co-sharers of the managing member of such a family In any one case, two or more of these duties may co-exist, but any one of them is sufficient to constitute the liability This liability, however, has its limitations The first liability does not descend beyond the grandson, whilst some authors hold that it covers payment of interest in the case of a father's debt only, and not of the grandfather's As regards the second liability, the heirs cannot be compelled to pay debts incurred 'for a cause repugnant to good morals' The third liability is limited by law, as now administered in all provinces except Bombay, to the extent of the assets inherited But these limitations are not of much practical importance Though occasionally an heir may be found willing to brand his ancestors with the stigma of im-

[1] Mayne, *Hindu Law and Usage*, 8th edition, p 394, on which book this account is based

morality to escape taking over their debts, such cases are rare and when they do occur have often been inspired by the original debtor himself Again a moneylender who is likely to be defeated by either the first or the third exception, would invariably endeavour to induce the heir concerned to execute a promissory note in his own name and such is the force of tradition that he would generally succeed If he does then the debt revives as the debt of the heir himself, and both limitations are avoided Nor is the heir s action in thus going beyond the requirements of the law itself solely due to ignorance of the legal position It is also due to a sentiment inspired partly by respect for the ancestor, partly by religious considerations The effect of this sentiment may be lamentable In the words of the Royal Commission on Agriculture the people are so accustomed to be in debt to take it over from their fathers and to pass it on to their sons that they accept indebtedness as a natural state of life [1] Nevertheless, it is a sentiment which it is difficult to condemn and which whether deserving of condemnation or not, yet in the circumstances of Hindu family life will pass away neither easily nor quickly

One of the Hindu lawgivers says he who having received a sum lent does not repay it will be born hereafter in his creditor s house a slave a servant a woman or a quadruped In other words an unpaid debt is a sin the consequences of which follow the debtor into his next life It is not, therefore sufficient for the heir *to take over the debt* it is also necessary that he should *pay* it From the point of view of the ancestor that is no doubt satisfactory from the point of view of the descendant however, it means merely that the new debt replaces the old and one creditor replaces another There is no doubt that a large amount of fresh debt is incurred to repay ancestral debt The Banking Enquiry Committee collected from various sources 43 sets of figures of classified debt, relating to areas as large as

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture* p. 434.
[2] Vrihaspati *pud* Jugannatha Digest, Vol. I p. 234

a tahsil and as small as a few families, but mostly to single villages The total amount involved was 33½ lakhs of rupees in round figures The amount described as due to the repayment of ancestral debt was Rs 4,81,000 or over 14 per cent

10 (5) *Maintenance of social prestige*

The caste system is essentially aristocratic Every caste has its appointed rank, and every individual's status in society is governed by the rank of the caste to which he belongs That status cannot be raised It can, however, be lowered if in any respect a man fail to obey the dictates of custom, and the higher the caste the greater the need for such observance. Some of the customs affecting social status have an important economic bearing

(*a*) A high caste woman must remain in seclusion She can give no assistance in the fields

(*b*) Custom forbids a Brahman or a Rajput to handle the plough The custom is said to be growing weaker, but is still generally prevalent Its origin is uncertain It appears to have no religious sanction, indeed, Manu in referring to the various means of livelihood open to a Brahman, after first mentioning the priestly and military occupations, adds 'if it be asked how he (the Brahman) must live should he be unable to get a subsistence by either of these employments, the answer is that he must subsist as a mercantile man, applying *himself in person* to tillage and attendance on cattle' [1]

(*c*) A high caste man who comes into physical contact with a member of an untouchable caste becomes impure, and must at once wash both himself and his clothes As we have seen elsewhere,[2] this taboo is weakening, and there are devices for evading it Nevertheless it does persist to some extent Most field labourers are 'untouchables', and it is difficult to avoid contact with them in some of the field operations in which a high caste man could assist

The result of this taboo, and of the taboo on handling

[1] *Institutes*, X 82
[2] Chapter V, par 15

the plough is that the high caste man is apt to confine his energies to supervision The economic results of all these customs taken together is, *firstly* to increase the cost of cultivation for since neither the high caste man himself nor his wife can take any active part in agricultural work, they are compelled to employ far more labour than lower castes whilst *secondly* the high caste man is generally content to leave his cultivation to his servants and gives it little personal attention with the result that it is rarely as skilful or productive as low caste cultivation where the Kurmi produces wheat the Brahman produces barley and only second rate barley whilst an expert eye could detect without difficulty which of two neighbouring fields of wheat, belonged to the Kurmi and which to the Brahman

(*d*) Finally, expenditure on various ceremonies is much higher amongst the high castes than the low Not only has a Brahman or a Rajput to spend more lest he lose social standing but he must observe all the twice born rites, whilst the man of lower caste can restrict him self only to the most important and there are sixteen of these all of which cost money [1]

On the other hand members of high castes usually possess certain privileges Both Brahmans and Rajputs, for instance usually enjoy a rental privilege which is often as high as 25 per cent Again they generally possess far more than their fair share of the larger holdings The Brahman moreover, by virtue of his Brahmanhood has a valuable subsidiary source of income in the shape of his priestly and caste dues which include not only fees for services rendered but presents (usually of food) that are made either on ceremonial occasions or by way of a caste penance

1 Comparison between certain castes (a) Brahman and Rajput

In short the high caste agriculturist possesses certain definite economic advantages set off by the costliness of his cultivation inferiority of his crops and the specially high expenditure which he must incur on his social obligations On balance the Brah

[1] For a list of the rites, see appendix to Chapter XIV

of meanness and industrious beyond comparison If his crops fail it is sheer hard luck His fault is quarrelsomeness and in litigation he never knows when he is beaten [1] As in litigation so in agriculture—he never knows when he is beaten He spends his life in quarrelling with nature The Jat never says die according to the proverb *Jat mara tab janiye jab terahwin guzar jae* (Never be sure that a Jat is dead till the days of mourning for him are over)

As for the Kurmi he is even more canny in money matters than the Jat, though less quarrelsome Most moneylenders amongst the tenantry are Kurmis It is reported from one registration office in the Basti district where the Kurmis are particularly strong in number, that of the total sum which passes from lender to borrower in a certain tahsil the Kurmi contributes a full half Generally his own indebtedness is small and he has money to put by at the end of the year His ambition is always the acquisition of additional land For the rest there is nothing to choose between the Jat and the Kurmi The Kurmi is always planting whether his crop lives or dies

14. Muslim indebtedness

The main reason for the growing poverty of the Muslims in this province is their high cost of living as compared with that of other communities The Muslim has not adjusted himself to changed circumstances and still adheres to the habits and ways which characterized him during the decadence of Muslim rule in India His standard of living is infinitely more expensive than that of the Hindu and always up to if not beyond his income Hospitality moreover is to him almost a religious duty God s angels do not visit a house where there are no guests The charge of thriftlessness can be more justifiably laid at the door of the Muslim than of the Hindu peasant His economic position is also seriously affected by the Muslim law of

[1] Crooke *Tribes and Castes of the N W P and Oudh* Vol. III p. 40.

inheritance. In a Hindu joint family, widows get merely a life interest, daughters get nothing, and the estate is managed by a *karta* or agent Amongst Muslims, on the other hand, the division of property after a death is inevitable, and often results in breaking up small estates into fragments which are not worth keeping But though the heir's income is thus diminished, his expenditure remains on the same scale as it was before the property was divided, for to cut down his expenses would bring disgrace to the family The Muslim, again, is more litigious than the Hindu The wrath of the petty Muslim *zamindar* is easily aroused, even on matters of minor importance If a tenant has the hardihood to refuse to work for him, he must be punished, if a neighbouring landlord has refused to allow the *zamindar's* cattle to graze in his pasture, he must be taught the wisdom of complaisance And the result is a lawsuit, or possibly a criminal prosecution Meantime, his family pride prevents him from taking up commercial occupations unless he happens to have been born into some trade, and even then he is rarely able to make both ends meet Finally, the Muslim woman, unlike her Hindu sister, must observe *purdah* in all but the lowest rank of society The natural result is that the Muslim falls quickly and easily into debt to an extent even greater than the Hindu Yet whilst he is ready to pay the most usurious rates of interest, his religion does not permit him to lend money on interest, and thus such capital as the Muslim possesses is often rendered inoperative

15 Figures of indebtedness by caste

Two sets of figures, collected by the Banking Enquiry Committee, are of interest The first set shows the comparative indebtedness of various groups of castes,[1] and is reproduced below —

[1] B E C 's report, Vol I, p 103

Table showing indebtedness by caste groups

Caste group	Number of persons		Amount of debt (000 s omitted)	Percentage of total debt	Debt per debtor	Debt per person
	Debt free	Indebted				
			Rs		Rs	Rs.
I —High castes ..	7 420	9 109	58,87	66	624	356
II —Good agricultural castes ..	5 608	7 287	11 79	14	162	91
III —Market gardening castes	1 345	2 010	2 60	3	129	77
IV —Low agricultural castes ..	3 443	4 417	4 26	5	54	36
V —Non agricultural castes ..	1,210	724	2,79	3	386	144
VI —Other castes	5,838	6 020	8,15,	9	135	68
Total ..	24 964	29 567	88 47	100	299	162

The castes included in the various groups were as follows —

I High castes—Brahman Rajput Musalman Rajput Saiyid Shaikh and Pathan.

II Castes of good agriculturists—Ahar Ahir Kisan Kurmi and Lodha.

III Market gardening castes—Baghban Kachhi Koiri Mali Murao and Saini

IV Agricultural castes of low social status—Bhar Chamar and Pasi

V Non-agricultural castes—Kalwar Kayastha Khattri, and Vaisya.

VI Other castes.

This table proves to demonstration how large a part of the total debt falls, and how heavy its burden is, on the high castes The reasons are not far to seek Not only is there the high caste man's extravagance to account for it, but it also includes by far the greater part of the debt of the big landlords If the high castes were indebted only to the same extent as the average of the rest of the agricultural population, then their total figure would only be 10½ lakhs (round), which means that the balance of their debt, some 48½ lakhs, or 83 per cent, is due to their social position and the expenditure which it entails The lowest figures, as might be expected, are those of the market-gardening castes and the non-agricultural castes, both of whom are relatively few in number, the lightest burden, however, for sufficiently obvious reasons, is that borne by the low agricultural castes. The cultivator belonging to the non-agricultural castes, if indebted at all, is heavily indebted, his figure stands next to that of the high castes On the other hand, as might be expected since this class contains such professional moneylenders as are also agriculturists, only a small proportion, some 38 per cent, are indebted at all The proportion of indebted and debt-free in the various groups is as follows

Caste group	Percentage of	
	Debt-free	Indebted
I	45	55
II	44	56
III	40	60
IV	44	56
V	62	38
VI	50	50
Total	46	54

Except in the non-agricultural group the variations are small

16 Gains and losses of land amongst various castes

The second set of figures show the extent to which various castes have lost or acquired land during the period 1907-8 to 1925-6 They are given in the following table which is adapted from that given in the Banking Enquiry Committee s report [1]

Gains and losses of land 1907–8 to 1925–6

Caste or caste group	Area (thousands of acres 000 s omitted) in		
	1907–8	1925–6	Difference
Rajput	16 341	16 230	– 111,
Muslim	8 963	8,532,	– 431
Brahmans, Bhuinhars and Tagas	8 085	8,366,	+ 291
Other agricultural castes	3 762	3 909	+ 147
Non agricultural castes ..	6,948	7 602	+ 654

The other agricultural castes comprised the Ahar Ahir Bishnoi Gujar Jat and Kurmi the non-agricultural castes were the Goshain Kalwar Kandu Kayastha, Khattri Marwari Sadh and Vaisya Rajputs and Muslims have lost heavily but though the greater part of

[1] Vol. I pp. 125-6.

It will be noticed that in this table gains amount to 1,092,000 acres against losses of 542,000 acres only The explanation is that the figures were taken out only for the castes actually mentioned and not for all castes.

their losses is the result of their indebtedness, yet the gains have not gone entirely to the professional money-lenders A considerable part has gone to the Brahmans and the richer agriculturists, notably Kurmis, amongst whom there are many amateur money-lenders

* Principal authority —*Report of the United Provinces Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee* (1930)

CHAPTER XIV

CASTE IN RELATION TO RELIGION

1 *The qualifications of a Hindu*

Hinduism according to Sir Alfred Lyall[1] is not exclusively a religious denomination but denotes also a country and, to a certain extent a race When a man tells me that he is a Hindu I know that he means all three things taken together—religion parentage and country To these three qualifications however must be added a fourth namely social organization for no man can be reckoned a Hindu who is not a member of a recognized Hindu caste For present purposes race and country can be neglected taken together they mean that a Hindu is a native of India who is not of European Persian Tartar or other foreign descent—which description however is too wide since it would include converts from the Hindu to other religions There remain two qualifications one social and one religious which calls to mind Sir W W Hunter s statement that Hinduism is both a social organization and a religious confederacy The object of this chapter is to examine the relation between these two aspects of Hinduism

The Hindu religion

The Hindu religion says Sir Edward Gait[2] is a complex congeries of creeds and doctrines It shelters within its portals monotheists polytheists and pantheists worshippers of the great gods Siva and Vishnu or of their female counterparts, as well as worshippers of the divine mothers of the spirits of trees, rocks and streams, and of the tutelary village deities persons who propitiate their deity

[1] *Asiatic Studies* (1899).
[2] *Census R port India* 1911 p. 114.

by all manner of bloody sacrifices, and persons who will not only kill no living creature, but who must not even use the word "cut", those whose ritual consists mainly of prayers and hymns, and those who indulge in unspeakable orgies in the name of religion ' This description, full as it is, is still incomplete To the list must be added worshippers of natural forces, of demons and ghosts, of ancestors, of saints and heroes The Hindu has the choice of pantheism and animism, of polytheism and monotheism, of demonolatry and hagiolatry, of ancestor worship and animal worship, of metaphysics and magic —of every 'ism' and 'olatry' and worship known to man Throughout the wide range of literature on the subject, there is not a single satisfactory definition of Hinduism,[1] which is not surprising, since it is impossible to define the indefinite Indeed, Hinduism is not so much a single religion, as a congeries of many, and very different, religions And it has become what it is as the result of two distinct processes, *firstly*, the evolution of an Aryan nature worship into theism, *secondly*, the continuous

[1] The following will serve as examples (*a*) 'A hereditary sacerdotalism with Brahmans for its Levites, the vitality of which is preserved by the social institution of caste, and which may include all shades and diversities of religion native to India, as distinct from the foreign importations of Christianity and Islam, and from the later outgrowths of Buddhism, more doubtfully of Sikhism, and still more doubtfully of Jainism ' (Sir D Ibbetson, *Census Report, Punjab*, 1881, par 214) (*b*) 'The large residuum that is not Sikh, or Jain, or Buddhist, or professedly Animistic, or included in one of the foreign religions, such as Islam, Mazdaism, Christianity, or Hebraism ' (Sir J A Baines, *General Report on the Census of India*, 1891, p 158) (*c*) 'The collection of rites, worships, beliefs, traditions, and mythologies that are sanctioned by the sacred books and ordinances of the Brahmans and are propagated by Brahmanic teaching ' (Sir A Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, 1899, Vol II, p 288) (*d*) 'What the Hindus, or the majority of them in a Hindu community, do ' (B Guru Prasad Sen, *Introduction to the Study of Hinduism*, 1893, p 9) (*e*) 'Magic tempered by metaphysics ' (Sir H Risley, *The People of India*, 1915 edition, p 233) Of these, the first is inadequate, because it makes no mention of belief, but only of ritual The second merely amounts to the statement that Hinduism is everything which is not anything else The third is a correct definition of only a *part* of Hinduism, i e Brahmanical Hinduism The fourth cannot be regarded, as defining a religion at all, though it would, if 'believe', or 'worship', or (better still) both, were substituted for 'do' The last is professedly a mere epigram, yet it is as informing as any of the others

absorption in that Aryan religion of Dravidian and other animistic beliefs and worships

3 Vedic nature worship

The religion of the Aryan invaders of India, as reflected in the Rig Veda, is a worship of natural phenomena in the guise of conscious and personal beings, with powers that man cannot control yet amenable to his invocations and sacrifices At first that worship was still unsettled the functions of the deities were not yet defined nor their relative importance and position the greatest to each worshipper was the one whom he was at the moment addressing Later there was some attempt at the construction of a well-ordered pantheon nature was divided into three regions, to each of which were assigned eleven gods one of whom was pre-eminent—namely Indra in the region of the sky Agni in the region of fire and Surya in the sun This was pure polytheism of that particular type which Max Müller calls kathenotheism which means that the deity invoked is for the time being the *only* deity

4 Vedic ritual

The ancient Aryan firmly believed in the efficacy of prayer and sacrifice By prayer the suppliant could bend the deity to his will by offerings he gave him vigour to battle with their mutual enemies This power of invocation was called *brahma* (devotion) whilst there was a special god whose name was Brihaspati or Brahmanaspati (lord of prayer) to protect and guide the pious worshipper The natural result was to produce a deep feeling of reverence for those who had knowledge of the various forms of ritual The officiating priest was called Brahman (a suppliant or worshipper) and there can be no doubt that the priesthood even at this time had a position in society which raised him above the rest of the people, save only the royal or military class Rajan or Kshatriya Such was the origin of that caste which has been so powerful in Hinduism for centuries, and such the origin of its power As master of religious ritual the Brahman was already indispensable to a religious community but he was not content Already priest he became theologian,

philosopher, lawgiver, statesman, till by sheer force of learning he raised himself to a position of pre-eminence, even above that of the Kshatriya nobility Of his achievements in other spheres of activity more will be said in another chapter, here we are only concerned with his influence on the development of the Hindu religion

5 *Developments of Vedism*

With the advance of religious reflection, the Vedic nature worship underwent modification in two directions On the one hand, theologians began to realize that their cosmic scheme was incomplete The gods rule nature, but who *made* nature, including the gods? Thus they were led to the conception of a deity, superior to the nature-gods, and creator both of them and of the universe But this conception always remained somewhat vague The exact place of this deity in the pantheon was never definitely settled, even his name was uncertain, for he was described by epithets, which are elsewhere attributed to other gods—Prajapati (lord of creation), or Visvakarma (maker of all things) Still, so far as it went, this meant a move in the direction, not perhaps of monotheism, but at all events of henotheism—i e a polytheistic system in which one god is supreme

Meantime, the metaphysicians, following another line of thought, began to perceive that all sentient beings, all forces of nature, even all gods, were directed by some hidden agency, which was, in all cases and always, essentially the same And so they were led to the conception of an all-pervading divine energy, of which gods and men and natural forces were mere manifestations, into which they were all ultimately absorbed To this energy, they gave the name *brahmă* But such a conception could not possibly satisfy the religious thinker He wanted a supreme god whom he could invoke by prayer, and propitiate by sacrifice, all that the metaphysicians could give him was an abstraction And the metaphysician proceeded to solve his difficulty, in the manner usual amongst metaphysicians, by hypostatizing

that abstraction [1] They turned the neuter *brahmă* into the masculine *Brahmā,* whom they put in the place of his real, though somewhat nebulous, predecessor Prajapati And so Vedism became pantheism, the product of Brahmanical thought

6. *Dravidian animism*

When the Aryan invaders entered India they came into close contact with indigenous Dravidian races, whose civilization was infinitely less advanced than theirs So far as it is possible to judge on the analogy of their descendants in the more backward parts of the continent their religion was a nature worship of a very primitive kind Their beliefs were frankly animistic their deities were rather ghosts than gods—shapeless phantasms of which no image can be made and no definite idea can be formed Some of them had spheres of influence of their own—cholera smallpox or other diseases some had their local habitations—rock or tree or river The Dasyu s method of worship was propitiation rather than prayer for most of these deities were malevolent of whom the most that man could expect was that they would refrain from doing harm yet if propitiation failed to move them they could be compelled by magic There are undoubtedly traces of supreme beings to be found in Indian animism who are regarded as benevolent but for that very reason they received less attention than those who were ready and able to do mischief

In Bradley trenchant phrase, metaphysicians call the Absol t god, because they cannot think what the devil else it can be

D Caird has said somewhere that unless a metaphysical theory can explain religion, it cannot explain its own possibility and so stands self-condemned. And this pantheistic system fails to solve three riddles—

( ) How in the beginning, did gods and men and natural forces proceed forth from the pre-existing energy ?

(b) How could god, or man (or metaphysicia) apprehend the energy of which he was himself only a transient manifestation?

( ) Why did the energy manifest itself both in and to any being?

So Risley op. cit.

These are what Andrew Lang somewhere calls the high gods of low races

There can be no doubt that, as time passed and the two new races, mainly by intermarriage, blended into one, their beliefs also became assimilated. The Dasyu wife would bring her gods with her into her Aryan husband's home, he would begin to worship them too. They were in their own country, he would argue, they might be mightily malevolent, especially to a stranger, it could do no harm, and it might be wise, to conciliate them. Meantime, the wife would teach her own religion to her children, and they would teach it in turn to theirs. Thus, in course of time, an aboriginal god would take his place with Vedic gods in the family pantheon, whence, if his worship proved sufficiently popular, he would ultimately rise into the national pantheon. Again, the Aryan soldiery no doubt brought back new gods from their campaigns with the rest of their booty, as the Roman legionaries did after them.[1] Or thoughtful theologians, engaged in a comparative study of religions, would notice that some Dravidian god had functions remarkably similar to those of some Vedic god, just as Julius Cæsar identified various Roman deities among the deities of Gaul,[2] and deciding that there was only one god under two names, they would proceed to worship him under both names. And the process has gone on through the ages. It is impossible now to trace the effects which the religions of later invaders—Yavana, Pahlava, Saka, Kushan, Huna—left on Hinduism; but it cannot be doubted that they did leave such effects. As for Islam, many of its saints and heroes have been deified, and to this day are worshipped, by many pious Hindus.[3] The gates of the Hindu Olympus have ever stood open to the strange gods of their neighbours, and they are open still. Nor let it be supposed

7. Amalgamation of Aryan and Dravidian beliefs

[1] The most striking instance of this method of acquiring a new religion at Rome is the adoption of the Mithra worship from certain Cilician pirates conquered by Pompey about 70 B.C. (Risley, op. cit., p. 243.)

[2] *De Bello Gallico*, VI. 17.

[3] Instances will be given below.

that Hinduism is unique in offering hospitality to foreign deities Precisely the same thing occurred in the religions of Greece and Rome indeed the Roman religion borrowed other people s gods even more freely than the Hindu religion

8 Revolts against Brahmanism

There came a time, therefore when priestly doctrines and popular beliefs became irreconcilable Brahmanical pantheism, whose only deity was a hypostatized abstraction wholly cold and wholly colourless could not possibly attract worshippers who looked on their gods as personal conscious beings both vigorous and active It is probable too that the sacerdotal class had already begun to arrogate to itself authority in other spheres than that of religion and had thus aroused the resentment of the Kshatriya nobility Both the Brahman and the Brahmanical religion became thoroughly unpopular and the result was that other religions arose of which two were definite revolts against Brahmanism

9 Buddhism

Of these revolts the first and far the most important was Buddhism which takes its name from its founder Gautama Buddha, a prince of the Sakya clan of Kshatriyas who lived in the sixth century before Christ It ignored the existence of God and so was rather a philosophy than a religion but it differed from all Brahmanical systems of philosophy because it linked ethics to metaphysics by its central doctrine of *karma* or automatic retribution This doctrine lays down that the nature of a man s actions and desires in each life determines the form of his next life if the bad that he has done outweighs the good he will descend to a lower existence if the good outweighs the bad he will rise to a higher until at last *karma* has run its course and he attains to *nirvana* the absolute extinction of individuality The stress which this doctrine lays on the practice of virtue made it acceptable to many Buddhism made rapid progress and for centuries was the state religion in many parts of India though it is less certain that it ever became the creed of

the people[1] But for the present argument, its importance lies in the practical conclusions that are derived from it Buddhism denies the sanctity of the Vedas and the efficacy of ceremonial and sacrifice, and rejects the claim of the priesthood to be regarded as sole masters and teachers of divine knowledge It was, therefore, in definite opposition both to Brahmanism and the Brahmans

10 Jainism

Jainism, which arose about the same period, was at one time regarded as an offshoot of Buddhism, which, in respect of its philosophical doctrines, it much resembles. It is now held to be an entirely independent system Its founder, Mahavira,[2] was, like Buddha, a Kshatriya It differs from Buddhism mainly in the possession of objects of worship, namely the twenty-four Tirthankaras—deified men who have 'made the pilgrimage', i e have attained perfect knowledge The two rivals to the title of founder, Mahavira and Parasnath, are respectively the last and last but one of these demi-gods

11 Saivism

Buddhism has long since disappeared from Northern India, Jainism is still alive Two other new religions, which can be regarded as popular modifications of Brahmanism, arose about the same time, and are also flourishing The first is Saivism, the origin of which is obscure Some hold that it is an offshoot of Buddhism, in which case the god Siva represents Buddha the ascetic It is true that by some of his worshippers he is regarded less as a god than as a devotee, all-powerful with the gods But the theory is untenable, for it does not explain Siva's two most important attributes, i e destruction and regeneration As destroyer, he is identified with, and bears the name of, the Vedic god Rudra, lord of the tempest, a fierce and destructive deity, who sends death and disease to men and

[1] It seems that though Buddhist (and Jain) monks acted as spiritual teachers, the services of Brahman priests were still utilized for the ceremonies at birth, marriage, and death *Census Report, U P*, 1901, p 66

[2] Some hold that the founder was Parshva or Parasnath.

cattle As regenerator he is Siva—the auspicious or fortunate one The word is used in the Vedas only as an adjective but in this shape Siva has certain points of resemblance with another Vedic deity, Pushan the giver of material blessings and connected with the marriage ceremony who is also called Pashupa as Siva is called Pashupati With these affinities, it seems certain that Siva is a deity of Vedic origin But he has many names and many aspects, and there can be little doubt that some of them are imported from non Aryan religions One of his forms and names, for instance is Bhairava [1] and Bhairava is simply an adaptation of Bhairon who is essentially a village godling the protector of fields and cattle Another perhaps the commonest of his names is Mahadeva and Mahadeva is an object of worship to many low castes whose other deities are entirely non Brahmanical Again the *linga* worship which is associated with Siva as regenerator is entirely alien from Vedism though characteristic of animism Saivism therefore is to be regarded as an Aryan religion but overlaid with non Aryan cults

ii Vaishnavism

The second religion was Vaishnavism of its origin thanks to the researches of Sir R G Bhandarkar we now know something definite, though much is still obscure Vishnu originally was one of the lesser Vedic gods, a genial benevolent being renowned for having crossed the universe in three steps, but otherwise of no special prominence During the Puranic period he acquired high esteem and possibly because his three steps were connected with the rising midday, and setting sun

[1] One of the curious facts in Hindu mythology is the extreme popularity of Bhairon. As Bhairava he is not only a form of Siva, but the protector ! the Jains. He is also Kal Bhairon, both in the Punjab and Rajputana, who drives away death. In Bombay he is Bhairoba, a destructive god. In Benares he is Bhaironath magistrate of the city, and guardian of all Siva temples. Finally he is connected with Sakhi Sarwar and is one of the many who are reckoned amongst the Panchpir Another of Siva epithets is Mahesh, which also means the great god.

[2] See his book *Vaishnavism, Saivism and the Minor Religions* (1914).

there was a tendency to identify him with, and even to exalt him above, the great Vedic sky-god, Indra, as is proved by some of Vishnu's later names, such as Vasudeva and Vaikuntha At the same time, the god of the Vrishni or Satvata race was Narayana, son of Dharma (right conduct) and Ahimsa (non-killing) A god of such parentage could not tolerate sacrifice; and in due course Vasudeva, a Vrishni sage, promulgated a reformed religion, which is said to be that contained in the Bhagavadgita In some obscure way, Vasudeva was first identified with Krishna, a *rishi*, and one of the authors of the Vedas, and then deified as Narayana himself Later, Narayana was identified with Vishnu, the link being Vasudeva, who was connected with both, and Vasudeva-Krishna is the name given to Vishnu's eighth *avatar* or incarnation, which he assumed to slay the demon Kansa At a later date still, Vasudeva-Krishna was identified with Gopala-Krishna, the god of the Abhiras, a non-Aryan pastoral race Vaishnavism, therefore, was, like Saivism, an amalgam of Vedic and non-Vedic beliefs

13 *Brahmanical compromise*

The policy of the priesthood in dealing with these revolutionary religions was one of compromise With the object of regaining their hold on the minds of the people, they proceeded to incorporate into their system the most important of the various objects of popular devotion Siva and Vishnu were joined to Brahmā to form a second triad of great gods,[1] a triple impersonation of the universal spirit into which they would ultimately be absorbed The male nature of this triad was then supplemented by associating with each member a female energy (*sakti*) Saraswati, goddess of eloquence and learning, was assigned to Brahmā as his consort, Sri or Lakshmi, goddess of fortune, to Vishnu, and Parvati, daughter of Himavat, god of the Himalayan mountains, to Siva Parvati, at all events, was probably a non-Aryan goddess, and under one or other of her

[1] The first triad was Indra, Agni, and Surya, the Vedic deities.

numerous names[1] was already extensively worshipped so that there was no doubt, a special reason for giving her a place in the Brahmanical system It has often been asserted that the Brahman priesthood was responsible for grafting into Hinduism all that mass of primitive cults that now form part of it or in other words that they deliberately exerted themselves to carry out that amalgamation of beliefs that has been described above Some go so far as to say that they did so for their own gain If to give to a Brahman is to worship God the larger the circle of worshippers the better for the Brahman and if new worshippers will not leave their gods behind them it would be foolish to exclude them on that account [2] In that case the Hindu religion would not be the result of natural evolution but a monstrous artificial edifice The facts do not bear out such statements There are numerous forms of popular worship at the present day with which Brahmans have no concern whatever They had undoubtedly to make concessions to popular opinion but they only did what the priesthood of every important religion has had to do in similar circumstances But no priesthood has ever made more concessions than necessary it is absurd to suppose that the Brahmans made as many as possible It is, no doubt true that Brahmans are not all of the same status or indeed—if the legends are to be believed—of the same descent and Brahmans of a lower class may be willing to assist their clients in worships that Brahmans of a higher class would scorn to recognize But the Brahmans with whom we are now concerned the old Aryan priesthood and its descendants are to be reckoned among the highest class

[1] Durga, Kali Uma Mahadevi Kalika, Bhawani are some of the best known perhaps the commonest is Devi. The account here given is the usual account but it is probably more correct to say that the Brahman theologian would regard these deities, not as forms of Parvati but as separate impersonations of the *sakti* or female energy

[2] A dictum of Sir D Ibbetson, apud Rose, *Glossary of Punjab Ethnography*

Such are the processes by which Hinduism has become what it is to-day—a heterogeneous mass of beliefs and practices ranging from the lowest to the highest At one end is animism, which regards life as a chaos of terrors, brought about by a company of shadowy and generally malignant powers, which strives to reduce that chaos to some sort of order either by cajoling those powers with gifts, or compelling them with magic At the other end is theism—a belief in personal gods, yet, because those personal gods are the result of a train of metaphysical speculation, a theism which is liable to merge into pantheism And between these extremes, room has been found for every form of belief and practice that the human imagination can conceive According to the popular reckoning, Hinduism possesses three hundred and thirty million deities—of whom a man may revere one, or few, or many, or none, as he pleases

14 Modern Hinduism

In such circumstances, it is manifestly impossible to predicate 'orthodoxy' of the religion or its adherents Orthodoxy is defined as correct or universally accepted opinion on matters of religious belief or doctrine, but there is no opinion regarding Hinduism that can be described as 'correct', to the exclusion of all other opinions, still less as universally accepted And when Mr Crooke and other writers apply the adjective 'orthodox' to Hinduism, what they mean is that body of doctrines and beliefs which are supported by the highest, i e the Brahmanical, authority, and which are also actually held by the majority of Hindus In other words, we get back to a modification of B Guru Prasad Sen's definition orthodox Hinduism is what the Brahmans teach, and the majority of Hindus believe

15 'Orthodoxy' and Hinduism

Brahmanical theologians reckon five principal manifestations of the divine spirit, namely, Siva, Vishnu, Sakti, Surya, and Ganpati Sakti, as already explained, is deity in female form, personified as wife of Brahmā, of Siva, or of Vishnu, or one of the numerous goddesses

16 Brahmanical Hinduism

that are usually regarded as different forms of the second of these Surya is the sun god Ganpati is Ganesh, son of Siva god of wisdom and captain of the host of *inferior deities they have few followers in this province* Brahma disappears altogether Any Hindu, whose principal worship (though not necessarily his *only* worship) is addressed to one or more of these great gods may be regarded as orthodox I calculate that, on this definition some thirty seven out of the forty millions of Hindus in this province fall into this category Further out of those thirty seven millions some four millions have been initiated into one or other of the recognized sects—Saiva Vaishnava or Sakta the nature of which is sufficiently explained by their names and Smarta who *worship equally all the five great gods Of the sectarians* of this province nearly half are Vaishnavas some six hundred thousand are Saktas or Smartas the rest are Saivas But on the other hand the total figure includes a number of low castes who worship, amongst a variety of non Brahmanical deities, only one of the great gods, usually one of the more common *sakti* forms —Kali Durga, Bhawani Devi In such cases, it is always possible that the single god on whose worship the claim to orthodoxy would depend is of aboriginal rather than of Aryan extraction And when it also appears that in many such cases that particular caste is not served by Brahmans there can be little further doubt on the subject

17 The low gods of high castes

Many castes of good social position even though they *are orthodox in the sense described* pay reverence to other gods that cannot be regarded as either Brahmanical or great The following are only a few instances of what (in imitation of Andrew Lang) may be called the low gods of high castes It must not, of course be supposed that all members of these castes worship all—or even necessarily any—of these deities

(*a*) The Ahiwasi is a caste of agriculturists that claims Brahmanical descent Besides Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi they worship Hanuman the monkey-god,

Dauji,[1] a name for Baladeva, Krishna's elder brother; and Saubhari Rishi, a deified ancestor

(*b*) The Bhat, another pseudo-Brahmanical caste, worship, in addition to the great gods, Mahabir, a word which means 'great hero', and is applied alike to Vishnu, to Garuda, Vishnu's steed, half eagle and half man, and to Hanuman They also revere Bare Bir, a deified ancestor, and Birtiya, protector of cattle

(*c*) Among Rajput clans, the Kanhpuriyas worship Mahisa Rakshasa, or Bhainsasura, the buffalo demon, the Kachhwahas' family goddess (*kuladevi*) is the Jamwahi Mahadevi of Jaipur, whilst they also worship Baladeva, the Bais worship both the snake, and a tribal goddess called Mathote, apparently a deified widow who became a *sati*

(*d*) Amongst the Vaisya castes, there are many peculiarities of belief Agarwals reverence the snake, as well as certain trees Agrahris, Kasarwanis and Kasaundhans worship Mahabir, and also the Panchpir (of whom more below), whilst the Khandelwals have some two dozen tribal goddesses, one to each trio of their *gotras*

(*e*) The Jats, as might be expected of a tribal caste, pay reverence to a host of deities of all kinds—Dauji, Guga Bir, one of the greatest of the snake kings, Lakhdata,[2] another name for the famous Muslim hero Sakhi Sarwar Sultan, who slew a giant and a jinn, Chamunda Devi, one of the eight 'great mothers',[3] Shaikh Saddo, a Muhammadan saint who found a magic lamp, like Aladdin, but, unlike Aladdin, misused it and was torn to pieces by the jinn, various ancestors and deified worthies of the tribe, and, finally, Burha Baba, the 'old master', a bad-tempered old shepherd, apt to afflict those who annoy him with boils

(*f*) The Kurmis, an important agricultural caste, worship Mahabir and Sitala, the smallpox goddess, Surdhir and Babi Pir, both household godlings, whilst the turnip seems to be a totem, since they may not eat it

[1] *Dau*—a term for elder brother
[2] *Lal hdata*—giver of lakhs
[3] *Ashta matri*

(*g*) The Sonars, or goldsmiths, have a large array of gods and godlings—the Panchonpir, Hardaur or Hardeva Lala the cholera godling Phulmati, younger sister of Sitala and Miran Sahib an arch magician, who led the Saiyid army in battle and fought even after a cannon ball had removed his head

18 Animistic beliefs

Some thirty castes [1] numbering some three millions of people, appear to ignore the great gods altogether and can therefore be regarded as unorthodox of which the largest are the Bhangi Bhar, Dharkar, Dom Khatik Kol Luniya Musahar Nat and Pasi The following may be taken as average examples of the beliefs of these castes

(*a*) The Baheliya is a tribe of fowlers and hunters Their deities are Panhar one of the Panchpir and Kalu Bir, a deified ghost Hardaur Lala the god of cholera Kala Deo a household godling and Miyan Sahib the saint of Amroha another name for Shaikh Saddo

(*b*) The Bhar one of the old aboriginal tribes, has a mixed assortment of deities The chief is Agwan Deo whose name is variously interpreted to mean the guide the fire-god and the fever god Others are Kalika another name of Sitala and Phulmati her sister Pari har one of the Panchpir and two deified ghosts, Banru Bir and Kashi Das Baba The last is sometimes said to have been a Brahman sometimes an Ahir he may be the same as Kashi Baba the godling of murrain who in life was a Brahman who was slain by an Ahir

(*c*) The Dharkar caste is usually regarded as an off shoot of the Dom tribe its principal occupation is making fans, baskets staves, and other similar articles out of bamboo which they regard as a sort of totem Their deities are thoroughly animistic, and many of them un-

[1] Agariya, Baheliya, Bansphor Basor Bawariya, Beldar Beriya Bhangi, Bhu Bhuiyar Dhangar Dharkar Dom, Doma Ghosiya, Kanjar Khairwa Kharwa Khatik Kol Korwa, Luniya, Majhwar Musahar Nat, Pankha, Parahiya, Pasi, Patari Saneriya.

One of the seven sister goddesses of smallpox is Agwani where the name must mean fever and according to one legend, Agwan Deo is brother of these seven.

common The best known are Birtiya, who is usually a guardian of cattle, but to the Dharkar is a household godling, the ubiquitous Panchpir, and Dulha Deo, the famous 'bridegroom god', killed by lightning on the way to fetch his bride, and turned into stone Others are Banhiya Bir and Deonath, two deified heroes of the tribe, a mountain god called Pahar Pando, Durasin, who may represent Jarasandha the demon (*asura*), and lastly Angarmati Bhawani, the goddess who sends sunstroke In addition, they worship the village gods (*deohar*) collectively, ghosts (*bhūt*), of whom they specially fear those of people who have been drowned (*burna*), or killed by a tiger (*baghaut*), and their ancestors (*purkha log*, the old people)

(*d*) The Kol is a tribe of aboriginal jungle folk, akin to the Bengal Mundas Their principal deities are Gansam, Raja Lakhan, Bansapti Mata, and Dulha Deo The first named[1] is a deified hero who was devoured by a tiger, and now protects others from the same and other dangers Raja Lakhan is the deified son of Raja Jai Chand of Kanauj, who was killed by Shahab-ud-din Ghori in 1194 A D, why the Kols should adopt him as a god is not clear, though a pillar near Chunar, which has an inscription in his honour, suggests that his dominions may have included the Kol country Bansapti Mata is the 'mistress of the jungle', it is unsafe to enter her domain unless she has first been propitiated Other minor deities are Chithariya Bir, 'lord of tatters', who protects his votaries against disease if a rag is hung in the tree where he lives, Raksha and Phulmati, the village and jungle godlings, demons, sprites (*prēt*), and the sainted dead

(*e*) The Luniyas, a Dravidian caste whose special occupation is earthwork of all kinds, are remarkable for a preference for Muhammadan deities They worship not only the Panchonpir, but also the Prophet, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain Their other deities are less interesting—

[1] An attempt has been made to hoist him into the Brahmanical pantheon under the name of Ghanasvama (black cloud), an epithet of Krishna

Mahabir and Agwan are the chief, with Kul Deo, which, however merely means the household god

(f) The Musahars, another Dravidian tribe, also have a varied pantheon They greatly fear ghosts especially those of Brahmans and Rajputs whom they call Daitya Nats whom they call Nat and Pahlwan (wrestler), Ahirs and Telis, whom they call Masan They worship two tribal ancestors Deosi and Ansari the latter was the first Musahar to carry a doolie and by a pun is called Dula Deo Another of their gods is Sadalu Lal who may be an ancestor too Of better known godlings, they revere Banraj the forest king Baghaut and Mahabir Gansam and Bansapti whom they regard as man and wife and whose wedding they celebrate yearly They also worship the village godlings collectively

19. Ancestor-worship

Certain types of worship are widely practised by orthodox and unorthodox Hindus alike of these the most important is ancestor worship Brahmanical Hindus, like other Aryan races such as the ancient Greeks and Romans, have always attached the greatest importance to the worship of their ancestors But the practice is not peculiarly Aryan it is also widely prevalent amongst those low Hindu castes whose beliefs like themselves are of non Aryan descent Nor can the fact be explained by supposing that in this matter these low castes have merely imitated their Brahmanical neighbours for the Dravidian worship differs widely from the Aryan not only in respect of its ritual but of the conceptions which underlie it The object of the annual *sraddha* ceremony of an orthodox Hindu is to accelerate the progress of the soul through the various stages of bliss to complete beatitude—in other words to benefit the ancestors themselves The ritual consists in the making of offerings not only to the *manes* of the ancestors but also and more importantly to the gods The Dravidian animist on the other hand worships his ancestors, because he fears them He believes that unless he propitiates them they will return to earth and make themselves unpleasant In other words, he worships them for his

own benefit, not theirs, and makes offerings to them only because they are themselves deities, or what pass for deities in his theology A few instances will suffice to prove these statements

(*a*) The Bhuiya and the Kol worship their father and mother (though not more distant relatives), because they believe that they will otherwise trouble their descendants with bad dreams, and cause disease The annual sacrifice is a goat and a fowl, if the suppliant can afford it, otherwise rice and pulse scattered about the courtyard will serve

(*b*) The Agariya offers a fowl once a year to the dead generally, and in addition a little water to the father and mother This suggests another difference between Dravidian and Brahmanical ancestor-worship, the Dravidian practice is due principally to a general fear of ghosts, but the ancestors get additional attention because, as having special knowledge of their descendants, they are specially dangerous

(*c*) The Cheio is decidedly more advanced towards orthodoxy than most similar tribes, for he is served by Brahmans of respectable standing, and is beginning to adopt the regular *sraddha* Nevertheless, he also worships his ancestors with precisely the same ritual as the Bhuiya, and holds precisely the same views of their malevolence Much the same is true of the Dharkar

(*d*) The Biyars are even more advanced than the Cheros, their worship is something like the ordinary *sraddha,* and they feed Brahmans on that occasion Nevertheless, they still retain their old animistic fears of their ancestors' readiness to harm them

(*e*) The Dhangar, on the tenth day after death, sacrifices a pig, cuts off its feet and snout, and buries them in the courtyard under a stone Then he strikes that stone with another, and adjures the ghost of the deceased (who has in fact been cremated), to rest in peace in the grave made for him, even if a magician (*ojha*) should try to wake him They have no further worship, because this ceremony is held sufficient to lay the ghost for ever

(*f*) The Ghasiyas, though in other respects a most pri-

mitive tribe, seem less afraid of their ancestors than others like them They offer them a meal once a year and pray to them to be kind to themselves and their cattle The Kanjars also regard their ancestors as comparatively well disposed and as a result only make an offering to them on festive occasions [1]

(g) The Majhwars seem to worship their ancestors, as distinct from ghosts generally only when a son or daughter is married or when somebody has a dream for dreams are sent by ancestors, and show that they need propitiation

It may be added that this Dravidian ancestor worship, when it is annual and not occasional usually takes place at the Holi festival in March not like the *sraddha* in Kuar (the end of August)

10. Deification of saints and heroes

From the worship of ancestors to the worship of other human beings is an easy transition and Hinduism has admitted to its pantheon many persons who were remarkable either in their lives or in their deaths One instance of such a deified hero has already been mentioned namely Raja Lakhan the god of the Kols but there are many more Valmiki for instance author of the *Ramayana* by a strange freak of mythology has become a god of the Bhangi caste, under the name of Balmik Others are Maheni the *sati* goddess of the Hayobans Rajputs of Ghazipur who died in 1528 A D and Hardaur Lala the murderer of Abul Fazl in Akbar s reign who was poisoned by his mistress in 1627 A D and is now the god of cholera Even criminals have been deified for instance Gandak a Dom godling who was hanged for theft at some unknown date And according to Sir Herbert Risley canonization has occurred in quite modern times Keshab Chandra Sen one of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj narrowly escaped deification in 1884 Sivaji the great Mahratta chieftain of the 18th century is worshipped at Ratnagiri whilst

[1] This is a striking proof of the view advanced by Sir H Risley amongst others, that in animism, the more benevolent the deity the less attention he is likely to get from worshippers (op. cit. p. 226)

everybody has heard of John Nicholson's experiences—who proved, if all that is related of him be true, a somewhat irascible deity

But perhaps the most numerous class of deified saints and heroes are the Pirs and Saiyids, who are of Muhammadan origin, but are revered both by Muslims and Hindus. The Persian word *pir*[1] means saint, whilst Saiyid, when used in this connexion, appears usually to be, not the title appropriate to descendants of Ali and Fatima, but a corruption of the Arabic word *shahid*, which means a martyr in the cause of Islam. The difference between *pir* and *saiyid*, therefore, is the same as between saint and hero, but the two terms seem to be used indiscriminately Ghazi Miyan, for instance, the chief of the Panchpir, whose real name was Saiyid Salar Masaud, could not reasonably be described as a saint, but he was indubitably a *shahid*, having been slain in battle with Suhal Deo, a Bhar chieftain[2] Several of these Muhammadan worthies have already been mentioned amongst the deities of various castes, for instance, Sakhi Sarwar Sultan, better known in the Punjab, whose real name was Saiyid Ahmad, Shaikh Saddo, also called the Miyan of Amroha, Aladdin's counterpart, much revered by women who desire to obtain the upper hand of their husbands, Miran Sahib, the great magician of Ajmer, Guga Pir, *alias* Zahir Pir or Zahir Diwan, the snake-king—though in this case it seems more probable that the saint was originally Hindu, with the name of Guga Bir, and was imported not from, but into, Islam[3] Other famous saints, to whose shrines Hindus as well as Muslims resort, are Shah Mina (died 1478) at Lucknow, whose assistance is valuable in legal difficulties, Baha-ud-din Madar Shah at

21 Muhammadan saints

[1] The similarity of *pir* with the Hindi *bir* (Sanskrit *vir*), which means hero, and is a common adjunct to the name of the deified, may have facilitated the adoption of the Muslim saint by Hinduism See the story of Guga Pir, just below

[2] And incidentally he was *not* a 'Saiyid', he was the nephew of Sultan Mahmud, and therefore a Turk

[3] According to one story, he was first converted to Islam

Makkanpur in the Cawnpore district and Ala ud-din Sabir at Piran Kaliar in Saharanpur

22 *The Panchpir* Of all these deified worthies of Islam the Panchpir, or five saints, possess the largest number of adherents Both Hindus and Muhammadans pay reverence to them they are worshipped by some fifty-three castes of whom forty-four are wholly or partly Hindu whilst of that number no less than sixteen are of good social standing, and only eight can be reckoned as unorthodox At the census of 1901 when the statistics of sects were fully recorded the number of their Hindu followers alone was put at over 1¾ millions but that covered only those to whom this was the *principal* worship I reckon that the total population of the Hindu castes who worship these five saints amounts to some 13½ millions

The original five were the Prophet Ali Fatima, Hasan and Husain which suggests a Shia origin for this worship but most modern Indian Muslims usually substitute five lesser saints whilst some recognize only four Whatever the number however the composition of the group varies greatly Amongst Hindus indeed the variations are so numerous that it is impossible to get any consistent account of these saints In the small district of Benares alone, Mr Crooke discovered five different lists, with a total of eleven names between them —viz Ghazi Miyan (five lists) Amina Sati (four lists) Suthan Ajab Salar and Buahna (three lists each) Parihar (two lists) and Bhairon Bande Kalika, Shahza and Bahlano (one list each) Other names that are often found are Subhan Barahna, Sah Jamal Sahja Mai Sahjadi and Hathile whilst the Kalwar caste also includes Brahma Deota and Bare Purukh The cult centres round Ghazi Miyan whose real name was Saiyid Salar Masaud, the nephew of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni He

[1] Examples are —Panchpi Baha-ul-Haq Shah Shams Tabriz, and Makhdum Jahaniya Jahangasht, all of Multan, Shah Ruqn-i-Alam Hazrat f Lucknow and Baba Shaikh Farid-ud-din f Pak Patan. Chaurpi; Ali Khwaja Hasan Basri Khwaja Habib Ajami and Abdul Wahid Kufi.

led a crescentade into Hindustan at the age of sixteen, overran the Doab and Oudh, and in 1034 A D, before he had reached his twentieth birthday, was killed in battle near Bahraich, and buried in a spot which he had chosen for his dwelling-place His godhead is probably due to his youth, he is a deity of the same type as Adonis and Dulha Deo, snatched away by an untimely death in early manhood Of the rest, several are obviously of Hindu extraction Bhairon, though a Hindu god, has a certain connexion with Islam, because he is regarded as the 'minister' of the great saint Sakhi Sarwar Sultan Kalika is simply a form of Parvati, Siva's consort. Bande and Sahja Mai both seem to belong to the class of 'mother goddesses', the former is worshipped singly by half a dozen castes Brahma Deota and Bare Purukh (great old man) are both deified men, whom the Kalwars describe as respectively a Brahman follower, and the spiritual guide, of Ghazi Miyan Parihar, by one caste, is described as the son of Ravana, king of the Rakshasa demons, what his precise connexion with the young Muhammadan hero may be, is not obvious Others seem to belong to Islam Ajab Salar merely means 'the wonderful leader', but the true name is almost certainly Rajab Salar, who was one of Saiyid Salar Masaud's lieutenants, the Kotwal of the army [1] Subhān is an Arabic word meaning 'praise', and might be part of a name, Suthān looks like a popular corruption of it Buahna and Barahna seem to be different forms of the same word, one caste identifies Barahna with Father Abraham Pir Hathile was the son of Ghazi Miyan's sister, whilst Sah Jamal is a saint with a shrine near Aligarh Amina was the name of the Prophet's mother, and it may be, as one caste that makes a speciality of her worship believes, that she was the original of Amina Sati,[2] the faithful wife, though the connexion between the Prophet's mother and Ghazi Miyan is not obvious It is impossible even to

[1] One caste calls him Rajab Salar His tomb at Bahraich is considered a sacred place

[2] Amina Sati, by some castes who worship her singly, is also called Amina Devi (the goddess Amina)

guess who Bahlano Shahza and Sahjadi may be [1] Some of these deities—Ghazi Miyan, Amina Sati Parihar, Bande—are worshipped singly as well as in company with the rest of the quintette The tomb of Ghazi Miyan at Bahraich is a place of pilgrimage

23 The worship of implements and weapons

Every year usually at the Sri Panchami festival in spring or the Dasahra festival in autumn, it becomes incumbent on every religious-minded person to worship the implements or insignia of the vocation by which he lives This statement of Sir Herbert Risley s is perhaps an exaggeration but there are undoubtedly many castes some of high position who carry it out Rajputs worship (or used to worship) their swords Kayasthas worship their pens and inkstands jewellers their pincers and blow pipe, bankers their ledgers grain merchants their weights, carpenters their saws and chisels barbers their razors and scissors cotton printers (*chhipis*) their dies In some cases the practice is semi-traditional the classical instance is the thug s worship of the pickaxe which he used to bury his victims Similarly the Amethiya Rajput worships a cobbler s tool (*ranpi*) because their ancestress, after a massacre found refuge in a Chamar s hut and the Bandhalgoti Rajput worships the *bankā* or knife with which a Dharkar splits bamboos, because of a traditional connexion with that tribe, though it is now called a poniard the symbol of Narwar their ancestral home Sometimes the tool is regarded as the vehicle of a god Barhais worship Visvakarma in the shape of a yard measure Lohars worship Mahadeva and Devi in the shape of their seat and their anvil In at least one case though there is no actual worship there is reverence the Tamboli carefully preserves the conservatory (*bhit*) in which he grows the betel creeper from ceremonial impurity In another case, the suitability of the tools is not obvious one subcaste of Kandus, who nowadays are generally shopkeepers worship the chisel hammer and T square because at one

[1] Sahjadi would be a common Hindi corruption of the Persian *shahzadi* a princess Shahza may also be referable t the same word.

time they were stonecutters I myself have on one occasion come across this custom The event occurred in Mirzapur in 1910, when having summoned a meeting of Kayastha *patwaris*, I arrived to find only one or two present On enquiry, I was told that they were absent because it was the day on which they worshipped their pens and inkstands [1]

24 The worship of the cow

The cow was not an object of veneration in the Vedic period, there is ample evidence in various Brahmanas[2] to show that the bull and cow were sacrificed, and also used for food By the time of Manu, however, such a feeling had come into existence, and was already very strong, for he classes cow-killing among the deadly sins Its origin, therefore, must have occurred between the Vedic period and the period when Manu's institutes were compiled, but the manner in which it originated has long been a controversial question The cow had already been idealized in Vedic mythology as Kamadhenu, the fabulous cow belonging to Indra, which was produced at the churning of the ocean [3] At a later date, cattle were closely connected with Krishna, as his epithets Gopala (cowherd) and Govinda (cow-finder) show, and no doubt the growth of Krishna-worship helped to popu-

[1] Sir H Risley (op cit, pp 235-236), has described the worship of orderlies of the Simla secretariat, an altar is set up, consisting of an office box, on which are arranged ink-pots, pen-holders, stationery, pencils, and 'all the clerkly paraphernalia by means of which the Government of India justifies its existence' The whole is 'draped with abundant festoons of red tape'—a piece of cynicism that is, I trust, unconscious I have enquired whether a similar practice prevails in the provincial secretariat I learn that on the *janamashtami*, or festival of Krishna's birth, a similar altar is actually set up, but it is merely for decorative effect, and is not worshipped All secretariat officials are invited to subscribe to this ceremony Muhammadan orderlies about the same time collect subscriptions for a *Maulud Sharif*—an account of the birth of the Prophet recited in Arabic and translated into Urdu

[2] Brahmanas are prose writings, in the nature of commentaries, attached to the various Vedas For details of the comments in these works, see R C Dutt, *History of Indian Civilization*, Vol I, p 253 *et seq*

[3] There is a somewhat similar legend in Scandinavian mythology Ymir, the first living being, was nourished by the milk of the cow Audhumla, which was created by the god Surtur for the purpose Kamadhenu means the 'desire-cow', i e the cow that grants desires

larize cow worship Again the *pancha gavya* or five products of the cow [1] are both useful for scaring demons and necessary as adjuncts to ritual whilst an agricultural people would naturally respect an animal of so much utility Her mythological importance her close connexion with one of the most popular of Hindu deities, her ritualistic and practical usefulness, are surely sufficient to account for the great respect in which she is generally held and even for her worship Nor of course is cow worship peculiar to India alone [2] At the present day the cow is an object of veneration to all Hindus save a very few castes Of these exceptions, the Chamar is the most important As his traditional function is tanning and one of his duties is the skinning of dead animals, especially cattle, he naturally has no objection to eating beef and no reason for venerating the cow indeed he has often been known to poison cattle for the sake of their hides, though Chamar *panchayats* often take strong measures to discourage the practice [3] The Dom in the plains the Korwa and occasionally the Bhangi eat beef but the first and third of these are the lowest of the low and the second is the least civilized of all the jungle tribes of the province The extent of veneration differs the minimum amounts to a refusal to kill the animal or eat its flesh the maximum to actual worship which is, however uncommon indeed I can only find two castes, the Dangi and the Golapurab that regard the cow as a deity though there is a festival called Gopashtami or Gokulashtami, when cattle are decorated and fed with special food a practice which closely resembles a sacrificial offering At the other end of the scale it is probable that most Hindus of education pay the cow no special reverence and like

[1] Milk curds, butter urine and dung Another of her products, used for making sectarian marks, is *gaurochana* a yellow pigment, of which the preparation is variously explained. I 9 1 vendor of *gaurochana*' was one of the occupations returned t the census (*Report* *U.P.*, 1911 p. 385). It also has certain medicinal properties.

[2] Apis, the sacred bull of the Egyptians, is one instance while Aaron's golden calf is another (Herodotus, II 38, 153; III 27-29 Exodus, xxxii.)

[3] See Chapter VI par 13 (vi) (c).

the members of the Arya Samaj, would justify the prohibition against her slaughter solely on the score of her economic usefulness. But the vast majority regard her as being, if not divine, at all events sacred. The *Amawas* of every month is set apart as the cattle's day of rest. The Brahmani bull, let loose after a death, like the scape-goat of the Jews, with the weight of the dead man's sins upon him, is allowed to wander where he will, and feed where he will. Many pious Hindus keep a cow in the house, and place her where the master of the house will see her when he wakes. The killing of a cow, even if accidental, involves the severest caste penalties.

25. The worship of Parameshwar.

Every Hindu, however primitive his other beliefs may be, has the conception of a supreme personal god, who is called Parameshwar.[1] According to the Puranic metaphysic, Parameshwar is the universal spirit when manifested as a person, who, according as he is actuated by apathy, activity, or goodness, becomes one of the three divine individualities, Brahma, Siva, or Vishnu. Clearly, the professed Saiva or Vaishnava has no real place for this deity in his cosmogony, and would probably explain his presence there by saying that he *was* Siva or Vishnu. But the philosophical explanation of him means little or nothing to the ordinary Hindu. He simply regards Parameshwar as a god above all other gods, the ultimate creator of the universe, who takes pleasure in good and abhors evil, but as being also much too exalted to take any active interest in the affairs of his followers. Siva, Vishnu, and all the rest of the heavenly host may be subordinate to him, but they are of much more practical importance, because they can and will render assistance to their petitioners. As an Indian friend recently put it to me, the difference between Parameshwar and other gods is the difference between the King Emperor and the district officers. But however indeterminate the Hindu's idea of Parameshwar may be, it makes of him at bottom a monotheist, or at the least a henotheist.

[1] Also Ishwar, Bhagwan, or Narayan.

Worship is perhaps, too strong a term to apply to the relation of most Hindus to this deity The Bhuiya the Chamar the Gandhila, the Gorchha and the Nat make offerings to him and some Hindu Banjaras are taught by their Brahman *gurus* to pray only to him But the worship of most Hindus is restricted to an occasional recitation of the *Sat Narayan Katha*[1] in his honour or the repetition of his name in the morning and evening They reserve their prayers and offerings for deities more accessible than Parameshwar

26. The Brahman relation to religion

The three twice born (*dvija*) divisions of the old Arya nations Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas though unequal to each other in social rank yet shared certain sacramental rites (*sanskāra*) connected with all the principal occasions of a man s life, from his birth to his death Of these the most important was the *upanayana* ceremony when the youth was initiated into the study of the Vedas and invested with the sacred thread (*janeo*) for it was this ceremony that constituted his second birth and made him *dvija* The Sudra had no part in these ceremonies just as he was kept out of all social intercourse with the Aryan twice born so was he kept out of the Aryan religion s doctrines and practices And these were the rites which it was the Brahman s especial duty to perform But the circumstances of the Aryans environment put an end to this exclusiveness The twice born were forced into intermarriage with the Dravidian Sudras and an Aryo-Dravidian race arose In later centuries there was further mixture of blood as the result of fresh invasions and the mixed castes—*vrisala vratya* and *varnasankara*—took the place of the old *varnas* In theory none of these were or could rightfully demand to be regarded as twice born But many castes still hold the title Most are those who trace direct descent

[1] An ccount of the manifestation f God to certain of his worshippers.

[2] The universality of the belief i Parameshwar has been officially recognized by the use of his name in the oath administered to Hindus i the law courts so help me God becomes so help me Parameshwar

[3] A f ll list is given in the appendix to this chapter

on one side from Aryan Kshatriya or Vaisya, who on that account perform the *upanayana* rite, and wear the sacred thread Others are those who, having in one way or another acquired or usurped the rank and name of a twice born class, have also usurped its distinguishing ceremonies Even at the present day, a caste will occasionally, on the strength of some claim to Kshatriya or Vaisya descent, take to wearing the sacred thread Nor is that all As Sudras, especially those classed as clean, came more and more under the influence of Brahmanism, they too began to perform other rites than the *upanayana* And the Brahmans who, as we have seen, had already compromised with Sudra gods, now were compelled to compromise with the worshippers of those gods They, too, had suffered to no small extent by constant contact with lower races They had seen the priests of low religions—Ojhas, Joshis,[1] and such like—appropriate their rank and title, and be recognized as Brahmans If the legends are true, they had seen kings 'create' Brahmans out of Kurmis and Ahirs and Bhars and Lodhas Some of their number had lost rank either by offences against social laws, or by yielding to the demands of powerful non-Aryan clients And so they acquiesced in the claims of the new 'twice born', whilst their lower grades sank so low as to serve the Sudra parvenus And that is still the state of affairs at the present day

An examination of relevant facts and figures has yielded the following results for the province —

(1) Out of a total Hindu population (excluding the Brahmans themselves), of 35½ millions, some 19¼ millions are served as priests by Brahmans of high standing In this total are included (*a*) the castes that claim Brahmanical descent—Bhuinhar, Taga, Ahiwasi, Bohra, and others, (*b*) all Rajputs and castes claiming a Kshatriya lineage, such as the Khattri and the Kayastha, (*c*) all the castes now generically known as Vaisya, (*d*) all the good agricultural castes, (*e*) a few occupational castes connected with trade in food, or personal service,

[1] Astrologers, not the Joshis of the hills

such as the Halwai and Kahar, who must necessarily preserve their ceremonial purity unsullied or which claim twice born affinities such as the Sonar and Belwar The lowest caste of any importance included in the list is the Kalwar but he has recently been rising in the social scale and now claims to be a Vaisya

(2) Some 6¾ millions are served either by Brahmans of definitely low standing or by Brahmans belonging to higher grades who are however despised for the service that they render to such castes Of these 4¾ millions are occupational or servant castes of which the most important are the Barhai Lohar Bharbhunja Kori Gadariya and Kewat The rest are tribal castes of Dravidian extraction the Bhar the Arakh the Pasi, and the Dusadh are the most important of these

(3) The next group of 8¾ millions includes 25 castes that have induced Brahmans necessarily of low standing to render them some sort of trivial service The most important of these are the Chamars,[1] Kumhars Dhobis Luniyas, Bhangis, Mallahs Khatiks and Dhanuks The forms of assistance which the Brahman usually renders to his humble clients is to fix auspicious dates for their important ceremonies, such as marriage to receive gifts on suitable occasions, sometimes, to carry out the worship of one of the more important gods or to honour weddings by his presence though taking no part in them himself The most pathetic case is that of the Chamar His occupation the food that he eats, and some of his habits render him abominable to every orthodox Hindu yet the society that despises him could not do without him He is extremely punctilious in carrying out his complicated rites, many of which are at least a colourable imitation of orthodox ceremonial He is extremely religious and though he worships numerous deities yet he has a much better conception of a supreme personal god than many other castes of his own, or even of better

[1] Rich Chamars can sometimes get Brahmans of a degraded kind t serve their rites.

[2] And his wif occupation she is the village midwife.

standing In some parts, for instance, he regularly worships Parameshwar, and, in other parts, he uses words at the funeral ceremony which show that he recognizes the existence of an all-powerful creator [1] Further, it was the Chamar Rai Das, one of Ramananda's pupils, who founded the deistic sect of the Srinarayani or Sivanarayani, into which many Chamars are initiated, whilst others belong to the Kabirpanthi and Ramanandi sects [2] In fact, he is as strict a Hindu as his betters will allow him to be

(4) The last is a small group of half a million persons and thirty castes, all of them of non-Aryan extraction. They fall into seven groups —

(*a*) Six tribal castes, all akin to the Central Indian Gonds, they are the Agariya, Badi Nat, Majhwar, Pankha, Parahiya, and Patari So far they have evinced little or no desire to have any dealings with Brahmans, they have, indeed, priests of their own, called *baigas,* who are mostly Pataris

(*b*) Five tribal castes, akin to the Mundari tribes of Chhota Nagpur, namely, the Dhangar, Khairwa, Kol, Korwa, and Sahariya They are in much the same case as the tribes of the previous group, though a few of the more advanced Kols are beginning to call in Brahmans of an inferior kind to eat sacrificial food in their houses, paying them to do so [3]

(*c*) A third group consists of four tribes belonging to the Dom race—the Dom of the plains, the Dharkar, Basor, and Balahar These are all the lowest of the low,

[1] *'Tuhi hai, tain ne paida kiya aur tain ne mar liya'* 'Thou art He, Thou hast made alive, and Thou hast struck dead'

[2] All these are Vaishnava sects The legend of Rai Das is a good example of transmigration beliefs One of the sect's holy books, the *Santa Virasa,* opens with the words 'the love of God and knowledge of him are the only true understanding', which shows the nature of the sect's doctrine For a full account, see Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the N-W P and Oudh,* Vol II, pp 185-189

[3] In the famine years of 1907-1908 a Brahman constable, who was a noted *shikari,* took complete charge of the Kols in his circle, who provided most of his beaters, I do not doubt that he, at all events, rendered them many a little Brahmanical service, out of friendship for those whom he openly called 'his children'

and no Brahman would ordinarily serve them though they have sometimes attempted to induce him to do so

(*d*) The fourth group consists of various gipsy tribes the Sansiya, the Bajaniya Nat, the Bawariya, Bajgi, Bengali and Habura The last named occasionally give Brahmans some uncooked grain at their funeral ceremonies but that seems to constitute their sole dealings with them

(*e*) The fifth group consists of three related tribes, the Bhuiyas, Bhuiyars, and the greater part of the Musahars A very few of the last named who have settled down to village life consult Brahmans as astrologers But the group generally will have none of their ministrations, preferring their own *baigas* whilst the Bhuiyar caste, which like the Patari provides many of these aboriginal priests, affects to despise them and even relates a ribald legend of them

(*f*) The next group consists of the Beldar and Kharot castes which belong to the same family as the Luniyas Orhs and Binds The last two castes have risen in the social scale sufficiently to receive the services of Brahmans of low degree and no doubt their relatives will do so too in time

(*g*) The last group consists of three hill or submontane tribes—the hill Dom the Raji and the Tharu The last named has occasionally made attempts to secure the ministrations of Brahmans but so far with very little success

27 *Summary*

The previous discussion may now be summarized as follows As the result of various causes, Hinduism is a bewildering collection of diverse beliefs doctrines and practices These can however be divided into two main classes Firstly there are those that relate mainly to the great Hindu gods in their various aspects of whom the chief are Siva Vishnu and their consorts and secondly there are those which spring from various non Aryan sources and relate to minor deities of all kinds—secondary gods, godlings, ancestors, canonized saints and heroes, animals and even natural objects The first class

are always, the latter class seldom, if ever, recognized by the Brahman priesthood The only or principal worship of a vast majority, some 87½ per cent of all Hindus, is directed to one of the Brahmanical great gods in the first class, and consequently may be described as orthodox worship, but a large proportion of the orthodox also worship deities in the second class, whilst the unorthodox minority worship only such deities Each caste selects its own deities, outside the great gods, the Muhammadan group of saints known as the Panchpir probably commands the largest number of adherents But though Hinduism may be, as Sir Alfred Lyall called it, 'a tangled jungle of disorderly superstitions', yet there are certain ring-fences round that jungle—certain forms of worship in which all, or nearly all, Hindus share, certain gods to whom they all pay reverence The first of these bonds of union is ancestor-worship, practically every Hindu, whether orthodox or unorthodox, follows this practice, and though both the nature of the worship and the conceptions underlying it may vary, yet the differences are not so great that they cannot be reconciled Every Hindu, again, has some conception, more or less definite, of a supreme personal god, whom he generally calls Parameshwar With the exception of a very few outcaste tribes on the very fringe of society, every Hindu pays at least so much reverence to the cow that he will not kill it, or eat its flesh, and with similar exceptions, every Hindu accepts such ministrations from the Brahman priests as they are willing to give him, and admits their spiritual supremacy

28 Religion and ethics

A Hindu's code of ethics is as high as that of any other civilized nation As Sir Richard Burn says, 'He knows that it is wrong to commit murder, adultery, theft, and perjury, and to covet, and he honours his parents, in the case of the father at any rate, to a degree exceeding the customs of most nations, which have no ceremony resembling that of the *sraddha*' At the same time, the Hindu religion neither is, nor contains, an ethical code A Hindu, if asked why a specific action

is right or wrong would never give as a reason that the gods had so ordained If he were asked what he had to hope from virtue and to fear from sin he would never mention divine reward or divine punishment in reply And yet his eschatology includes sufficiently clear conceptions both of heaven and hell Hell is the kingdom of Yama god of death whose duty it is to judge and punish the wicked but his power is limited If the dying man s eyes in his last moments are fixed upon a sacred stream especially the Ganges then he will escape from Yama even if he be the worst of sinners And if no sacred stream is available then the correct ritual by the death bed and at the funeral can keep Yama s messengers away The Chaitanya sect of Vaishnavas go even further for they hold that the mere mention of any of Vishnu s names by the death bed even if the mention be accidental or inimical or actually blasphemous, will save a sinner from hell and secure his admission to heaven On the metaphysical plane, salvation to a Hindu is absorption of the individual self into the universal self (*paramatman*) which amounting as it does to mere emancipation from the troubles of existence coupled with the loss of personal consciousness, is no better than annihilation But as soon as man begins to believe in a personal god he will cease to believe in abstract salvation For the merging of one individual self in another individual self is un thinkable and though man may live after death *with* God he cannot live *in* God And so we find that Saivism and Vaishnavism each has its own heaven called Kailasa and Vaikuntha respectively the former situated in the Himalayas the latter on the mythical Mount Meru To these heavens are transported the souls of the faithful and of those who by death bed ceremonial have escaped from Yama there to dwell in such state of beatitude[1] as each has deserved But not for ever The Hindu

[1] Of these states there are three; *al bya*, or dwelling in the same place as god; *samipya* or dwelling in the presence of god and *sarupya* or acquiring the form of god. The last is generally held t be the highest state of beatitude; but some, under the influence of pantheism, add *sayujya* or absorption in the niversal spirit.

believes firmly in the transmigration of souls (*sansara*),[1] and regards heaven and hell as temporary abodes, where the soul remains in the interval between its emancipation from one mortal body and its assumption of another. Linked to the metaphysical doctrine of *sansara* is the ethical doctrine of *karma*, or automatic retribution, already mentioned as a doctrine of Buddhism, according to which a man's thoughts and actions in one existence determine the status and condition of his next existence. If the good outweighs the evil, he will rise to a higher grade of life; the virtuous Chamar may be reborn a Vaisya or a Rajput. If the evil outweighs the good, he will fall to a lower level, and the Brahman may be reborn a Chamar, as in the legend of Rai Das, founder of the Srinarayani sect of Vaishnavas. And because it is automatic, *karma* is also inexorable, affording neither room for repentance nor hope of forgiveness. But it is not a religious doctrine; indeed, *karma* lies entirely outside the sphere of divine influence, so that no god, however potent, can modify or impede its action.

29 *Karma and ethics*

The ethical value of the doctrine of *karma* has often been doubted. It is argued that since consciousness comes to an end with death, no man can remember the events of his previous existences, and therefore can form no estimate of their effect on his present existence. It is indeed possible to go further, for any given condition of life may be either a reward for virtue displayed in a lower condition, or a punishment for sins committed in a higher condition. Consequently, as Sir Herbert Risley puts it, 'the philosophic sinner . . . may . . . console himself with the thought that, though undoubtedly a reckoning awaits him, he will have become somebody else by the time the bill is presented'. And no man—at all events, no philosophic sinner—will mind running up a

[1] The origin of this doctrine is uncertain. There are only unimportant traces of it in the Vedas. Some regard it as the natural complement of the doctrine of the universal self (Eggeling, *Encyc. Brit.*, 11th edition, s.v. *Hinduism*), some as an importation from animism, where the idea of transmigration would certainly be at home (Macdonell, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, 1900, p. 115, and Risley, op. cit., p. 238.)

bill if somebody else will pay it [1] To such arguments, a Hindu would probably reply that the continuance of consciousness *was* possible, and had actually occurred in the case of great ascetics Rai Das the Chamar for instance, was according to the legend fully aware of his former Brahmanhood, and of the causes that had led to his rebirth as a Chamar Such a reply is of little assistance however for even if the fact be true few can claim to be great ascetics But these arguments, though they may be valid in theory are of no practical import ance Every Hindu firmly believes that sin will certainly entail retribution in a subsequent existence Every Hindu born in a degraded condition will admit that the degradation is the result of evil-doing in a previous exist ence In short *karma* though it may lack in logic, is a very real and important element in the Hindu s code of ethics

Though neither the Hindu religion as a whole nor any branch of it can be regarded as a

30. Bhakti and ethics

code of ethics yet Vaishnavism incul cates one tenet which has a very real ethical value This is *bhakti marga* the doctrine of personal devotion to the deity Primarily, perhaps, *bhakti* in the Vaishnava s creed is man s duty to God practically however it regulates the Vaishnava s conception of his duty to his neighbour For he holds that he can best show his devotion to his god by helping his fellow man It is *bhakti* which explains those numer ous shrines and temples and *dharmsalas* those wells and tanks and bathing *ghats* which are to be found dotted about the countryside—gifts made by pious Hindus to the glory of God and the service of man It is because of the importance which Vaishnavism attaches to *bhakti* that Professor Monier Williams has declared it to be the

[1] These arguments apply with far greater force to the Buddhist than t the Brahmanical doctrine of *k rma*. For Buddhism denies the exist ence of soul and the connecting link between lif and lif is some craving or desire; f it i the former life which persists into the second lif when if good, it is satisfied, and, if evil it is frustrated. But clearly if there i no soul, there can be neither consciousness nor memory in the second life of the first.

only real *religion* of the Hindus—since religion implies devotion

31 *Caste and religion*

Writers of the older school hold that the Hindu religion and the Hindu caste system are inseparably connected Professor Eggeling,[1] for instance, has asserted that 'the cardinal principle which underlies the system of caste is the preservation of purity of descent, and purity of religious belief and ceremonial usage' This view is related to that old theory of the origin of caste, now generally discarded, which represents it as the artificial product of the Brahman priesthood All that need be said here is that if the caste system was devised with the object of preserving 'the purity of belief and ceremonial usage', it has been a singular failure For the old Vedic beliefs have been modified by metaphysical speculation, and overlaid by a mass of alien practices, and the Vedic ritual, which could be lawfully performed only by an Aryan priesthood for an Aryan people, is now in daily use amongst a people of mixed descent

Nevertheless, caste and religion have each a certain effect upon the other Religion, in Sir Herbert Risley's words, 'exercises a subtle influence on family ritual and domestic usages, and through these tends insensibly to modify and transform the internal structure of Indian society'[2] Religion, for instance, has caused the formation of four important sectarian castes It is also responsible for the formation of new endogamous groups within a caste Amongst the Rastogis, worshippers of Hardaur Lala will not intermarry with worshippers of Mahabir or the Panchpir The Muraos have two endogamous sections, named respectively Saktiha and Bhaktiha[3]—Sakti and Vishnu worshippers Similar sections exist among the Binds (Panchpiriya), Chamars (Raidasi), Nais (Senapanthi), and Chhipis (Sadh and Namdeopansi), but there are no doubt many more

[1] *Ency Brit*, 11th edition, s v *Hinduism*
[2] Op cit, p 216
[3] The word means 'devotee'

On the other hand, caste exercises an influence, even more subtle, though no less real on religion through the medium of the Brahman himself The Brahman is socially supreme He owes his hegemony to a variety of potent causes—his ancient lineage, his wide and varied learning the temporal ascendancy which in the past he acquired as the all powerful minister of puppet kings Most of all perhaps, he owes it to his work as legislator for to a people who regarded custom as law he was wise enough to declare that law was custom [1] And so Hindus, though they may fear and even hate him (as much proverbial philosophy proves) nevertheless respect him greatly and because they respect him as supreme in society are all the more willing to admit his supremacy in religion—a supremacy based on the fact that in a highly religious community he is the sole repository of theological thought and ceremonial usage That readiness finds its most obvious expression at the present day in the pathetic eagerness of castes on the outer fringe of Hinduism to receive the Brahman s ministrations, which will allow them to pass within the pale of orthodoxy

3 Caste and ethics

The Hindu religion as we have seen has no ethical importance it concerns itself solely with a man s duty towards God but not with his duty towards his neighbour And *karma* is a philosophical not a religious, doctrine But the caste system provides an effective substitute indeed no dread of divine punishment could provide a moral sanction more powerful than dread of caste penalties The efficiency of that sanction is proved by the account of the system of caste government given in an earlier chapter the reality of that dread can best be proved by a common saying '*Panch Parameshwar* —The caste council is God—says the Hindu

See Chapter XV *passim*.
See Risley op. cit. pp. 305 307 for numerous examples.

CASTE IN RELATION TO RELIGION

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APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XIV

The sixteen Sanskaras of the Hindus

(1)	Garbhadhan	Consummation of marriage
(2)	Punsavan / Simantonnayan	Gestation
(3)	*Jat karma*	Delivery
(4)	Nam karan	Naming
(5)	Nishkamana	Taking out (of the house)
(6)	*Anna prashan*	Feeding with solid food
(7)	Chura karma	Tonsure
(8)	Karna bedha	Ear piercing
(9)	*Upanayana*	Initiation
(10)	Vedarambha	Study (of the Vedas)
(11)	Samavartana	Completion of study
(12)	*Vivah*	Marriage
(13)	Grihashrama	House and family life
(14)	Banprasthashrama	Life as a teacher
(15)	Sanyasashrama	Asceticism
(16)	*Antesht karma*	The last rite—Cremation, etc.

[Those in italics are the most important.]

A rite invoking the divine blessing on the act of consummation.
Precautionary rites to secure the wife's health.
Also called *nakirnisarana* usually combined with the next rite.
Usually performed in the sixth month; the food is as a rule rice.
Commonly called *mundan* and *kanchedan*. The former takes place in the third, the latter in the fifth year

This is the principal rite for the twice born It, in fact, constitutes the second birth' Investiture with the *janeo* is part of this ceremony It takes place between the eighth and eleventh year

Literally commencement of Vedas

The three stages of a man's adult life. Banprasthashrama means literally Life in the forest because the teacher lives as a hermit.

Other Brahmanical rites, which are not *sanskaras* are —

(1) *Barhai* (or *nakh katiya*)—a rite on the twelfth day after birth when the babe is shown to his male relations, and the women relatives cut their nails and make presents.

(2) *Mul santi*—a rite performed if the child is born in the asterism of Mula to obviate its ill luck.

(3) *Pathana* or *vidyarambha*—the formal commencement of education, which takes place before the *upanayana*. It marks the end of childhood.

CHAPTER XV

CASTE IN RELATION TO LAW

1 Hindu law and usage

Mr J D Mayne[1] entitles his famous work '*A Treatise on Hindu Law and Usage*', and his earlier chapters are devoted to showing that the two things, law and usage, are by no means co-extensive As a general proposition it can be said that Hindu law is ultimately always usage, crystallized, codified, and adapted by Brahmanical interpreters, but Hindu usage—meaning thereby the actual body of customs observed by Hindus—is not always law, still less Brahmanical law And for our present purposes this is a distinction which it is necessary to develop, for it will be found that caste is a factor of legal importance only when its custom happens to be contrary to the general principles of Brahmanical law

2 The customary basis of Hindu law

Hindu law, or to be more accurate, Brahmanical law, is recorded in the Sanskrit works of certain early sages and the commentaries upon those works This law was never a legislative code, drawn up by lawgivers and deriving its authority from its promulgation by them The Institutes of Manu, for instance, are not in the same category as the Indian Penal Code or the Code Napoléon They are a description of what the author believes to be, sometimes of what he merely wishes to be, the law And what Manu believed to be, and stated as, law, was, as a matter of fact, existing custom This fact he fully realizes himself 'Immemorial custom,' says he in a famous verse, 'is transcendent law'[2] All that he and other Brahmanical writers did was to codify custom

[1] This section is based entirely on his work The third edition was dated 1878 the eighth, which I used, was dated 1914
[2] *Institutes*, I 108

But the observation of this customary law was not universal in India either before or after its codification Neglecting other parts of the country we may quote Sir Henry Maine s *Village Communities* with regard to the law in North-West India The conclusion arrived at is first, that the codified law—Manu and his glossators—embraced originally a much smaller body of usage than has been imagined and next that he customary rules reduced to writing have been very greatly altered by Brahmanical expositors Indian law may be in fact affirmed to consist of a very great number of local bodies of usage, and of one set of customs reduced to writing pretending to a diviner authority than the rest exercising consequently a great influence over them, and tending if not checked to absorb them Hindu law consists, therefore, of written (Brahmanical) law and unwritten but legally valid custom The former corresponds fairly enough in its general features with the broad facts of Hindu life the latter introduces many local and sectional differences in detail But even where the written Brahmanical law is accepted in its entirety so far as its letter is concerned, it is not always accepted also in its spirit And this is especially true of the religious element in the written law Most Hindus follow for instance the Brahmanical law of succession and adoption but not all of them base their acceptance of those laws on the religious principles which according to the written law underlie them

It is not necessary to discuss Mr Mayne s reasons for holding that the written law is not of Brahmanical origin but is based upon immemorial customs which existed prior to and independent of Brahmanism and even of Aryanism The discussion of the early history of caste in the preceding chapters will incline us to accept his conclusion What the Brahmans did was to give existing customs, whether Aryan or Aryo-Dravidian a religious significance, and to modify them if necessary with that purpose In early days their position as ministers and judges enabled them to interpret custom according to Brahmanical ideas in later times the decisions

of our courts, based on the opinions of their pandits, carried on the tradition At the present day the villager, when doubtful of the rule of conduct applicable in any given circumstances, consults his priest At all times and everywhere Brahmans have been in a position to colour native uses with their own religious ideas, and to supplement, supplant, or explain them by their own doctrines The result is that even utterly non-Aryan and non-Brahmanical customs have been influenced and modified by Brahmanism.

3 *Custom versus law—*
(a) *In the ancient authorities*

In such circumstances as these, it is obvious that a custom which is proved to be binding on those who observe it, should logically be able to override the written law And the Brahmanical writers are wise enough to admit it As we have already seen, Manu is responsible for the dictum that immemorial custom is transcendent law, he further asserts that the sages 'embraced as the root of all piety, good usages long established'[1] Nor was he content with vague generalities for he also lays down that a king must enquire into and establish the particular customs and laws of different classes, localities, trades, and families[2] We have already seen that the trade-guilds had laws of their own which the king recognized Yajnavalkya in the same way states that a conqueror should preserve the usages and laws of a newly-conquered people[3] The *Mitakshara* also, lays down the antithetic proposition to Manu's principle about custom and law for, says the author of that work, even practices which are inculcated by divine authority may be abandoned if they are or become opposed to public opinion[4] And the position may be summed up thus The law is itself codified custom If a custom sanctioned by that law becomes obsolete, it may be abandoned despite that sanction, and if a custom not

[1] *Institutes,* I 110
[2] Ibid, VIII 41
[3] Yajnavalkya, I 342
[4] *Mitakshara,* I 3, 4

expressly sanctioned by that law is found to be in force it is valid even if it overrides the law

4 (b) In our modern courts

The British courts of justice so far as was possible to them have given effect to these principles Under the Hindu system clear proof of usage will outweigh the written text of the law, said the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the Ramnad case[1] And in theory and within certain limitations, every High Court would be prepared to give effect to a custom which was proved to exist For instance it has been held in several cases that the Jains, though in most matters they adhere to the Hindu law yet do not believe in the Vedas, or practise the *sraddha* and consequently are not bound by the legal principles which spring from these religious elements Their customs therefore may be and are completely different from those of ordinary Hindus, in some respects especially in the matter of adoption Again it has been held that the Bohras, despite their Brahmanhood may adopt a sister s son which is totally opposed to Hindu law

5 Limitations on the upholding f custom

In theory therefore the legal principle is quite clear caste custom overrides the written law In practice however, it would not be easy for a suitor to establish the validity of any particular custom The High Courts have defired strictly both the kind of usage they would admit and the kind of evidence necessary to prove it The custom must be uniform[4] of ancient origin continuous definite[7] it must not be opposed to morality or public policy[8] It must be fully

Collector f Madura Moottoo Ramali ga 1 M I.A. 436.
6, N W P 382 All. 688 3 All 655 : 3, Bom. 257 (The references are to the various series of High Court rulings—both here and in subsequent notes.)
4, All. 53
7 Mad. 250.
3, Mad., 75 0, Bom. 34
7 Mad. 50 Cal. 86.
All. 440 2, All. 48.
Many rulings, following *Institut* VIII 4

supported by evidence of cases where it has actually been followed, or where it has been accepted or upheld by the decisions of courts or *panchayats* or by the statements of experienced and competent persons, though such statements will have little weight in the absence of proof of actual examples of the usage in issue.[1] Even in the most favourable circumstances it would be a difficult (and expensive), task to prove the validity of an overriding custom

6 *Difficulties in the way of establishing caste custom*

And the circumstances would rarely be favourable The divergences of custom from Hindu law are greatest and most important in the lowest castes and the lowest castes are also the least educated There is no documentary record of caste customs the settlement *wajib-ul-arz*, which is prepared for every village and carries with it a presumption of its truth, rarely deals with the usages of particular castes though it may deal with usages special to the village Nor is there any written record of the decisions of *panchayats* In practice, the suitor must rely on the oral evidence of 'experienced and competent persons'—i e of the elders of his community The villager's memory is long yet, if the custom in issue, however well established, only took effect on rare occasions (and obviously this type of custom would generally form the subject of a lawsuit, since a custom of common occurrence would be too well known to admit of dispute at all), it might well happen that no example of it had come to light within memory And in that case the evidence of witnesses, however 'experienced and competent', regarding the validity of a custom would amount to a mere expression of opinion, and according to the Madras ruling carry little weight Nor is that all The witnesses produced in such a suit would generally be interested and consequently unreliable whilst any attempt to obtain independent witnesses would often be a failure, because villagers are, or pretend to be, ignorant of their own usages 'We consult the Pandits,' they will say and leave it at that. In

[1] 7, Mad , 250

any case such witnesses must generally be sought at a distance—which fact would at once raise a doubt whether the custom in issue were equally valid everywhere Proof of uniformity antiquity and continuity of a custom as required by the High Courts, is in such circumstances well nigh impossible And it is perhaps fortunate that the ordinary claimant would generally be content with the decision of his own caste *panchayat* and rarely trouble the courts at all Indeed if a suitor—at all events a suitor belonging to a caste which is ruled by a permanent *panchayat*—has recourse to the courts to establish a caste custom, it is scarcely too much to say that that very fact raises a presumption against the validity of his claim for it would suggest, either that he dare not bring it before the *panchayat* or that he has done so without success And either fact would be—or at all events should be—damning to his case

Need f a cord f caste customs

It is much to be regretted that so little has been done in the way of collecting authentic records of local customs, says Mr Mayne in his *Hindu Law* As a matter of fact, a great deal has now been done in the United Provinces, for instance, Crooke s *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh* (though it needs some revision and a certain number of additions as the result of the lapse of time) is as authentic and full a record of the customs of most castes as could be desired That book, or a revised edition of it would be entirely suitable for acceptance as an authority by the courts But it is not so regarded and, as matters are, it is often necessary to go far afield to obtain the proof of custom that is needed

8 Differences between Hindu law and cast customs

And there are important divergences between the law and the customs of many low castes As an instance we may consider the forms of marriage prescribed by that law, and compare them with the forms actually found[1] The forms as prescribed by Manu and other lawgivers are eight in number —

[1] *Institutes* III. 20-42

(i) The Brahma—which is the 'voluntary gift of a daughter, clothed only in a single robe, to a man learned in the Vedas'—i.e. to a Brahman, though this form is now regarded as admissible for all castes, so long as its essential attribute is present—viz. the absence of any payment for the bride.[1]

(ii) The Asura—which is merely marriage by purchase of the bride.

(iii) The Arsha—which is a modification of the Asura, the price (according to Manu a pair, or two pairs, of kine), paid for the bride has dwindled down to a merely nominal sum.

(iv) The Gandharva—which is 'the reciprocal connexion of a youth and a damsel with mutual desire', and in so far as it can be regarded as marriage at all, means pre-marital immorality followed by some more permanent union.

(v) The Rakshasa—which is merely marriage by capture.

(vi), (vii) and (viii) The Daiva, Prajapatya and Paisacha—which are now all obsolete and need not be described.

Of these, according to Mr. Mayne, all but the first two are obsolete at the present day, whilst the second, it would seem, would only be legally recognized if a custom to that effect were fully proved. But an examination of caste customs makes it clear, firstly, that the third, fourth and fifth forms also survive; and, secondly, that there are some well-established and even common forms which cannot be brought under any of the eight forms without ignoring their principal characteristics, or extending to an inconvenient degree the meaning of certain texts.

9. *'Arsha' marriages*

The Arsha form differs from the Asura only in degree; in the latter the bridegroom 'gives as much wealth as he can afford to the father and paternal kinsmen and to

[1] Madras Sudder Court, 1850, 44.

the bride herself', whilst in the former the bride price is something nominal a pair, or two pairs, of kine, in the text of Manu There are no less than thirty seven castes who practise marriage by purchase [1] the price in every case consists of clothes ornaments and a sum of money In the case of twenty six of these the sum of money is under twenty rupees In these twenty six castes at all events the marriage is in the Arsha form whilst in the other eleven castes where the sum of money paid is considerably larger it would be in the Asura form

10. Gandharva and Rakshasa marriages

The question of the validity of a Gandharva marriage has actually been before the courts In one very old case of 1817 it was held valid for Kshatriyas, whilst in a more recent case it was refused legal recognition as contrary to morality Yet in all essentials—viz pre-marital immorality followed by a more permanent union—it still survives amongst a certain number of low castes [4] The Rakshasa form by that name, is dead some of its essentials according to Manu's definition— the seizure of a maiden by force from her husband while she weeps and calls for assistance, after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in battle or wounded and their houses broken open —have also disappeared as a result of modern prejudice against murder But the gipsy tribes, who kidnap women from other communities, still preserve the main principle of this form merely substituting cunning for force

11 Marriage forms not falling under Hindu law

At the present day one of the most common of all forms of marriage amongst Hindus, even the highest is the dowry marriage where the bride's father pays a bridegroom price in the shape of a dowry with his daughter [6] That payment is neces-

Chapter IV par 5.
H [illegible] Mall v R[illegible] Bhadoorun cited in Bengal Sudder Court, 1846, 340.
3 All 738.
Chapter IV par 18.
Chapter IV par 1
Chapter IV par 4

deserted wives, and wives who have abandoned their husbands for good and sufficient reasons, is sanctioned by the early lawgivers[1] Manu was the first authority on the other side though even he has texts which seem to support the earlier view whilst he expressly permits the marriage of a virgin widow to her late husband s brother[2] The marriage of widows and—under certain restrictions—of divorcées is common amongst abori ginal tribes and low castes all over India and has been recognized as legal by the High Courts again and again[3] By the Hindu Widow Marriage Act (XV of 1856) the marriage of widows has been legalized for all castes and the question of the judicial recognition of such a marriage could not now arise

But in respect of the married widow s rights on the family of her first husband the position is not so clear Under Hindu law, a widow is entitled to maintenance by the family of her first husband or, in certain circumstances to inheritance of his property So long as her remarriage was unlawful it naturally involved the forfeiture of these rights, as being a bad case of incontinence Act XV of 1856 though legalizing the marriage of widows, expressly deprived them of all rights and interests in their deceased husband s property on their remarriage[4] And it is established beyond dispute that wherever a caste permits the marriage of a widow custom insists that she shall lose all rights or claims whatsoever on her deceased husband s family—unless indeed she marries her husband s brother when the question could not arise The second husband must repay to the family of the first husband the bride price if any paid by the first husband in fact he *buys* the widow from her owners The severance is so complete that the widow must leave her children by the first husband with his family though in some castes so much of a concession

[1] Narada, XII 97 101 and elsewhere Baudhayana, II. 20 Vasishta, XVII 13 Katyayana, 3 Dig 36.
[2] *Institutes* V 6 163 VIII 226 IX 64, 70 76, 175-6. For discussion cf. Mayne *Hindu Law* Chapter IV
[3] See Chapter IV para. § 5 and 6, *supra*.
[4] Act XV of 1856, section 2

is made to humanity that she is allowed to keep a child that is actually at the breast [1] In some cases, in Bombay and Madras, the validity of this custom has been recognized [2] elsewhere a different, and (I say it with respect), an incorrect, view has prevailed It has been held, for instance, that Act XV of 1856 does not apply to castes, which at the time when the Act was passed, already permitted widows to marry and consequently that in such castes widows have full rights of maintenance or inheritance in the families of their first husbands That is to ignore the validity of a custom which is much more ancient than the Act itself, and which, so far as I am aware, is absolutely universal [3] And the practical consequences of this view are serious Except in so far as it may have facilitated occasional marriages of widows amongst would-be reformers of the caste system, it is safe to say that the Act has had no result whatever I doubt if throughout the length and breadth of India there is a single caste which has adopted widow marriage in consequence of its legalization The natural social impulse is in exactly the opposite direction for as a caste rises in the social scale, the first non-Hindu custom which it discards is widow marriage It can be confidently asserted that no caste permits widow marriage at the present time which did not permit it at the passing of the Act in 1856 though there are certainly some which permitted it then and do not permit it now It follows, therefore, that according to such rulings as I have mentioned there is no caste in existence to which section 2 of that Act, which deprives a widow on marriage of her rights on her first husband's family, now applies and the rulings have defeated both the intention of the Act and the custom

[1] Cf Chapter IV, par 7

[2] e g old cases in Borrodaile's Reports (1825)—1, 431, and 2, 361, and 1, Mad, 226

[3] It would be interesting to enquire why section 2 of Act XV was passed Might it not be that the drafters of this Act knew this custom and gave effect to it in this section?

13 Immoral customs

The principle that customs contrary to morality or public policy will never be enforced by the courts has, of course prevented the recognition of many widely-established usages for instance such as are connected with the prostitution of dancing girls, the abandonment of a husband by a wife followed by a subsequent remarriage, an agreement to assist a man with money to obtain a wife a village custom that recognized the *gandharva* form of marriage * have all been refused legal recognition And there are doubtless many more whilst there are certainly some more which would be refused such recognition were they to come before the courts At the same time as Mr Mayne hints it is possible to go too far in the observance of this principle For instance there is a distinct caste of dancing girls who live by immorality and have special rules of adoption and succession *inter se* there seems no reason why these facts should not be recognized and the rules made valid

Usefulness of a knowledge of caste custom

Enough has been said to show that many difficulties confront the court that must adjudicate on a question of caste custom It cannot however be too strongly stated that a working knowledge of the caste system and caste customs is essential to any officer that has to deal with the people Reference has already been made to criminal charges of adultery or enticing away a married woman but instances could be multiplied In a case tried some years ago by the present writer the prosecution was based entirely on a conversation held *tete-à-tête* between an elder brother and his younger brother s wife There is the strictest of taboos on intercourse of any kind between this pair of relations and a question how in the circumstances, this

e.g. Bom. 24
1 Mad. 9.
3 All. 738.
Chapter IV par 20. It is not too much to say that there is always something doubtful about criminal charges under sections 497 and 498 I P C For if true, the *panchayat* will generally have done all that the complainant could possibly desire.

conversation took place at all produced a confession of perjury.[1] In another case, where a Brahman was accused of passing off a girl of low caste as a fit mate for another Brahman, the accused's guilt was proved to demonstration by his refusal to eat *kachcha* food cooked by the girl It is unnecessary to give further examples it must be obvious that the assertion made above is true, and that unless an officer knows the lines along which Indians think and the principles which guide their actions, he cannot—especially if he himself is a foreigner—understand either their thoughts or their actions

Principal authority—Mayne, *A Treatise on Hindu Law and Usage* (8th edition)

[1] This taboo is universal It has been noticed in operation even in high caste and well-educated families

CHAPTER XVI

CASTE IN THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

1. Previous discussions.

The past development of the caste system and various aspects of its present condition have now been described. It still remains to consider the possibilities of its future. But the future can only be profitably considered in the light of the past, and it becomes necessary to begin by gathering up previous discussions into a connected account.[1]

2. The Vedic period.

When the Aryan invaders first entered India, they were already divided into three social classes, similar to those existing amongst their kinsmen in Iran.[2] Of these classes, two, the ruling or military class, and the priestly class, were already recognized as superior to the Vish or Aryan commonalty. At first the names of these two classes had not been definitely fixed,[3] but before long they became known respectively as Kshatriya and Brahman. The priesthood at this time was definitely a profession to which were admitted recruits from other classes, and at this time, and for many years after, the priesthood was subordinate to the ruling class. The Aryan invaders brought few women with them into India, and had to seek wives from the aboriginal inhabitants whom they called Dasyus. These were a primitive race, in every way alien to the Aryan civilization, religion

[1] The previous discussions concerned are principally those in Chapters II, VII, XIV, and XV.

[2] These were the Rathaestao, Atharva, and Vastrya.

[3] Rajan was possibly the most common name for the ruling class; there were many names for priest—*rishi*, *kavi*, *brahman*, *brahmaputra*, are only some. It is worth noting that the first of all priests, who brought fire from heaven and instituted sacrifice, was named Atharvan, which corresponds closely to the name of the Iranian priest.

and colour. The process of intermarriage was therefore distasteful, ceasing as soon as enough women had been bred to supply the needs of the community, but as their branches pushed further into the country, it recommenced, until there were many groups of various degrees of mixed blood, all strongly averse to further intermarriage Such intermarriage was certainly more frequent amongst the commonalty than the ruling class, and probably more frequent amongst the ruling than the priestly class, whose ceremonial purity would have been affected thereby. But it undoubtedly occurred even amongst them, as is proved by many legends[1] And so arose the four famous *varnas,* or 'colours'—a significant name—, the first three called Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, after the existing Aryan social classes, the fourth called Sudra, a term of uncertain meaning, possibly the name of some Dasyu tribe Concurrently with the mixture of blood, there had been a mixture of religions a number of cults, practices, and deities derived from the primitive animism of the Dasyus were imported into the Aryan nature worship The Brahman, charged with the duty of administering Aryan rites to an Aryan people, cannot have approved of either process of amalgamation, but, like the priests of other religions, he had to compromise with the worshippers whom he served And, indeed, his own position was weak, for by dint of metaphysic, he had transformed the old Vedic religion, with its personal gods, into a new pantheism with no deity but a hypostatized abstraction, called Brahmā—a cold and colourless being that had no appeal for a warm-hearted people, used to worshipping warm-hearted gods

3 Late pre-Buddhist developments

The progress of civilization introduced certain important changes in the Vedic social system It would seem, firstly, that the tendency to endogamy caused by the amalgamation of two races of different blood had sensibly weakened with the passage of time, at all events, we hear of numerous in-

[1] The legend of the Dusadh girl who married a Brahman is one of the best of these folk-tales it is given as an appendix to this chapter

stances of mixed marriages both at this and at a later period Secondly trade and industry became organized into a number of guilds or corporations of persons following the same occupation which quickly became influential and later were powerful enough to secure for themselves important privileges. They soon succeeded in establishing the principle of hereditary function, which predisposed them in favour of guild endogamy And lastly long before the end of this period, the Brahmanical order whose original function had been confined to the expert knowledge and performance of religious ritual had acquired a monopoly of all important branches of learning[1] They had become the theologians, the philosophers, the physicians, the lawyers and judges of the age—possibly also its artists and its engineers Not *only so but the king s family priest was able to make* his voice heard in the royal councils[2] and so the Brahmans became the age s statesmen capable of making and unmaking dynasties

4 The Buddhist period (550 B.C. to 650 A.D.)

These Brahman statesmen often exercised an authority greater and more real than that of their royal masters indeed there were times when it seemed probable that they would be able to overthrow the old aristocracy and replace it by a theocracy But though the Kshatriya might fear and even hate the Brahman he could not do without him and as the whole tone of the Jataka folk-lore[3] proves the relations between them became seriously embittered This political enmity between class and class was reinforced by a religious enmity The later *pantheistic doctrines never became*

[1] Amongst the great Brahmans of this period are Gautama, Vasistha, Baudhayana Yama, Harita, and the older Manu. The *Institutes* of Manu that we now possess may be dated t about 200 A.D. but they are late recension of a much earlier work. Manu is *presented* as the proto-man, son of Brahma or his personification, father of the human race but he was, no doubt, a real teacher

[2] See the legend of Visvamitra and Vasistha which is dated bout 700-600 B.C., in the appendix to Chapter II

[3] These stories, written from the Kshatriya standpoint, never fail to exalt him above the Brahman, and even declare that the latter is lowborn (*hina jacco*) in comparison with the former

popular, and various religions arose, which drew away many of the Brahman's former adherents. In most cases, the priesthood were able to defeat opposition by importing the new cults into their own religious system, but one of these, Buddhism, proved an irreconcilable antagonist Founded by a Kshatriya prince, it was adopted by the Kshatriya nobility, and so became a state religion, and though the Brahmans never entirely lost their influence with the common people, and, especially, retained control of the domestic rites (*sanskara*), yet a struggle for spiritual supremacy began between Buddhist monk and Brahman priest which lasted, with varying fortunes,[1] for ten centuries. Whether this struggle ever culminated in a religious war is uncertain, though the legend of Parasurama suggests it[2] At all events, it ended after the death of King Harsha of Thanesar (650 A D) in the complete victory of Brahmanism That victory, however, was due not so much to the Brahmans' own merits, as to the circumstances of the time Whether the Kshatriyas ever had to face Parasurama or not, they were compelled to face enemies as dangerous from outside India For this was the period of the foreign invasions, which began with the expedition of Alexander the Great, and ended with the inroad of the Huns in the fifth century A.D , and constant warfare gradually weakened, and finally destroyed, the military power of the Kshatriyas From the ranks of their conquerors, there arose a new nobility, which in course of time was absorbed in the Hindu social system, and in virtue of their position as *de facto* rulers, usurped the style and rank of Kshatriyas This was the Brahman's opportunity Though many of these pseudo-Kshatriyas, or *vrisalas*, as Manu calls them, imitated their predecessors in embracing Buddhism, yet, even less

[1] Kadphises II (85-123 A D), the Kushan conqueror, embraced Saivism, and Chandragupta II Vikramaditya (375-412 A D), was a Vaishnava

[2] Parasurama, 'Rama with the axe', is represented as a Brahmanical hero, who 'cleared the earth thrice seven times of the Kshatriya caste, and filled with their blood the five large lakes of Samanta'

than their predecessors could they do without the Brahman s knowledge of public affairs and his temporal power thereby increased [1] And the disappearance of the old ruling class left him socially supreme, the one remaining link with the Aryan past, infinitely superior in the eyes of the people to their foreign rulers

5 The caste system before 650 A.D.

Of these newcomers, some were barbarians, as alien from the Hindu as the Dasyu had been from the Arya others, more civilized nevertheless possessed social customs that could not easily be reconciled with those of Hinduism The intrusion of these foreigners into a fastidious and exclusive society necessarily tightened anew the endogamous restrictions which had previously been somewhat relaxed and though these were not yet as rigid as they afterwards became yet Manu s statements show that endogamy was a general rule that admitted of few exceptions The prohibition against the marriage of widows was probably introduced at this period [2] Function was hereditary, and any attempt to exchange the traditional for another occupation had serious consequences Generally speaking, the caste system as described by Manu whose account may be put at 400 A D resembles in all important features the system of to-day But it is not the same

[1] Great Brahmans of this period are Apastamba, Vishnu, Yajnavalkya, Narada, and the later Manu, among law-givers Chanakya and Vasudeva (who founded the Kanva dynasty), among statesmen.

[2] It appears first in the later Manu. Infant marriage belonged to an earlier period (pre Buddhist); it is referred to by Gautama, Baudhayana, and Vasistha, as well as Manu. There is no authority for commensal restrictions but they are probably very old.

[3] Manu mentions a long list of occupations the pursuit of which should render Brahmans unfit to take part in a *sraddha* ceremony—physicians, temple-priests, meat-sellers, shopkeepers, usurers, cowherds, actors, singers, oilmen, gaming-house keepers, spicers, bow makers, animal trainers, astrologers, bird-fanciers, dog-breeders, architects, falconers, cultivators, shepherds, and carriers of dead bodies. Even at the present day Some of these occupations are followed by Brahman or pseudo-Brahmanical groups e.g. Palliwal (shopkeepers), Bhat (bards), Joshi (astrologers) Ahiwasi, Bhuinhar and Taga (cultivators) and Mahabrahman (attendants on the dead).

6 The final stage

The final stage in the evolution of caste seems to have been reached between the death of Harsha of Thanesar in 650 A D and the end of the twelfth century This was one of the darkest periods of Indian history, when the country was broken up into many petty kingdoms and states, that were constantly at war with each other and with what was left of the aboriginal and foreign tribes. Distances were, as always, great, communications were bad, travelling was unsafe each state was compelled to be self-supporting, and so were evolved the numerous local subdivisions of widespread castes And because no man dared go far afield in search of a bride or of customers, these local groups became perforce endogamous, and the custom of hereditary function was strengthened. Nor did the advent of the Muhammadan power ameliorate the situation, till the strong rule of Akbar and his successors brought comparative peace to the people. But after Aurangzeb's death, disorder broke out again, and only came to an end, in this province, with Lord Lake's victories in 1803 Caste law, therefore, has been fixed for the last seven centuries at least There have been many internal changes since that time The process of segmentation has never stopped, and still goes on, as groups, for this reason or that, have risen or fallen in the social scale, they have separated from the parent caste and become endogamous But all these changes have taken place within the caste system, in obedience to caste law And though there have been minor modifications in that law under the influence of modern conditions, yet in all essential matters the caste system is still what it was seven centuries ago

7 Educated opposition to caste

For the past thirty years there has been manifest among the better-educated classes of the community a certain feeling of resentment against the trammels of the caste system, which has grown stronger with the progress of education, and has led on occasion to acts of open rebellion Many Hindus, especially if they have received a part of their education

in England condemn unreservedly the commensal and food restrictions They hold that they depend on antiquated ideas that have long since ceased to have any meaning that in so far as they keep apart persons of unequal social position they are unnecessary and in so far as they keep apart persons who are equal in all respects save caste they are ridiculous The number of those who are ready to take part in the practice known as inter-dining , not only with other Hindus, but with Muhammadans and Europeans, is constantly increasing but even those who strictly observe the commensal restrictions often disapprove of them Many too condemn extravagant expenditure on wedding ceremonies, or the prohibition on the second marriages of widows those who have crossed the seas rebel against the custom which compels them to undergo a purificatory ceremony (*prayaschitta*) on their return before they can recover caste privileges or even eat a meal with their family As has already been explained the educated members of many castes have deserted their traditional functions, because they prefer to put their learning to better account in some other trade or profession Finally few if any educated Hindus in this province would nowadays defend the practice of infant marriage and there are many caste and other associations which are pledged to do their best, by precept and example to put an end to it But as the figures of successive censuses show they have had so far but a small measure of success In 1891 the number of girls under 15 that were or had married was 239 per mille in 1921 it was 218

8 The Arya Samaj opposition to caste

Of all reformers that have attacked the caste system in recent years, the most vigorous is the Arya Samaj a religious body founded by Dayanand Saraswati[1] Of the theology of the Samaj no more need be said here than that it is a bold straightforward monotheism founded on the Vedas with a definite creed and a simple ceremonial and that it constitutes

[1] Born 1824 or 1827 died 1883. Samaj means assembly congregation.

the most important religious movement that has occurred in India for several centuries But the Samaj has also done valuable social work It acknowledges no castes save the four *varnas* of Manu, and holds that membership of these is determined, not by birth, but by personal qualifications and attainments. A Sudra can become a Kshatriya if he has the necessary qualities, a foreigner (as Dayanand once told a Christian missionary), can become a Brahman if his acts are those of a Brahman. This, of course, is the very negation of the caste system, indeed, it is scarcely a social classification at all. It may be that practice in this matter does not yet fully conform to principle, but the mere preaching of such a revolutionary doctrine is already much Nor (though it is in the forefront of the Samaj's programme), does it appear to deter converts, for their numbers are increasing steadily, whereas Aryas only numbered 5 per 10,000 of the population in 1891, they numbered 45 in 1921 As the logical result of its general views on the caste system, the Samaj countenances marriages between members of different castes, though instances of such intermarriage are still rare But in other directions, the Samaj has been more successful It is entirely opposed to infant marriage, and whilst the number of married or widowed Hindu girls under 10 is 61 per 1,000, the similar number of Aryas is only 21, and of those a majority were probably married before conversion It encourages the remarriage of widows, it insists on the curtailment of wedding expenses, it has whittled down the commensal and food restrictions to the minimum Finally, in caste as in other matters, the Samaj preaches a return to the Vedas, and by so doing greatly enhances the cogency of its social propaganda, which is thus placed upon a religious basis

9 *Modern conditions and caste*

Under the pressure of circumstances, some caste customs have been materially modified In some castes, the exogamous restrictions, grown intolerable with time, have been relaxed The levirate has disappeared almost entirely, the old bride-prices have been stereotyped, and, as a result of the decreased pur-

chasing power of money have thus been reduced An abandonment of the traditional occupation is no longer regarded as calling for social ostracism and the principle of hereditary function has ceased to be universally recognized as binding The caste councils have been shorn of a part of their power Especially the commensal restrictions are no longer as rigid as they used to be They have indeed always admitted of exceptions ever since the time of Manu it has been fully recognized that the hungry traveller may obtain food as best he can whether he thereby infringes caste regulations or not [1] The distinction drawn between *kachcha* and *pakka* food forms another exception and is an excellent example of practical casuistry The incidents of railway travel have further relaxed these restrictions It is obviously impossible to build a cooking place (*chulha*) in a railway compartment or even on a station platform it is inconvenient to make searching enquiries regarding the caste of a platform food vendor, especially if the wait is a short one Having drunk water from his hands it is foolish to ask about his caste says the proverb and the wise traveller avoids trouble by making no enquiries at all Similarly he will ignore the possibility that his next door neighbour in a crowded railway carriage may belong to a caste whose touch is pollution for he knows that if he does not pocket his caste scruples, he may have to pay the difference in fare and finish his journey in a higher class compartment

10. The present position of caste

It would however be a mistake to conclude that the efforts of social and religious reformers, or the disintegrating force of modern ideas, have impaired in any serious degree the vitality of caste All the customs principally attacked—infant marriage, virgin marriage the commensal and food regulations, even heredity of function—are caste customs, as it were, by accident In the case of infant and virgin marriage, the sanction is religious the former depends on the belief

[1] It is the duty of all Hindus to give hospitality to any hungry traveller who asks for it.

that the birth of a son at the earliest possible date is desirable to save his father from hell by performing the *sraddha*, the latter depends on the character of marriage as a sacrament Commensal and food restrictions are the result of animistic taboos, reinforced by the Brahmanical doctrine of ceremonial purity, and they too are customs of a quasi-religious kind Heredity of function is a commercial and not a social principle All these, in fact, are not true social customs, but customs, the observance of which society has, for various reasons, chosen to enforce, and they could all be wiped out of existence without affecting the essential principle that underlies caste—namely, the principle of endogamy It is true that some reformers would abolish the marriage restrictions, and, in fact, the Legislative Assembly has recently passed an Act[1] which legalizes intermarriage between castes It is also true that from time to time a marriage is announced in the press which contravenes the caste law, but the very pæan of triumph which accompanies the event is sufficient proof of its infrequency And the reformers are few, the orthodox are many The mass of the people have no desire to relax their marriage rules, they cannot even conceive the possibility of anybody feeling such a desire And so long as the marriage rules remain as they are, so long will the caste system endure

11 The depressed classes

A problem which, in recent years, has engaged the attention both of social reformers and politicians is the 'raising of the depressed classes', with the object of improving both their social status and their civil position That problem in the United Provinces neither presents the same difficulties, nor has the same importance, as in other parts of India The province has no caste so low that its members cause pollution at a distance,[2] or by the mere fall of a shadow, that they may not enter the high caste quarter of a village, that they must leave a public road on the approach of a Brahman,

[1] The Hindu Civil Marriage Act

[2] The pariah's distance is 64 feet—nearly the length of a cricket pitch

and give notice of their own proximity by a particular cry.[1] There are untouchables but they convey pollution only by contact; whilst the superstition is now moribund, few take any account of it save the Brahman and even he deals with a case of pollution in a practical manner that suggests that he will before long ignore untouchability altogether. The low castes can always get land for cultivation or employment and if the lowest of them usually have to live in a quarter or a hamlet of their own the reason is not so much their own personal impurity as the unpleasant nature of their occupations, and of the animals, especially pigs, that they generally keep. Indeed the initial difficulty in this province is to decide what castes should be classed as depressed. Some would so class all castes from the members of which the twice born will receive neither food nor water. As has been explained elsewhere,[2] the question whether a high caste man can accept a gift of cooked food depends not on the caste of the donor but on the caste of the cook,[4] whilst he can accept uncooked food from anybody. Apart from that point however this criterion is inconclusive, for a caste's food and water restrictions vary from place to place whilst it would also lead to absurd results. The Kalwar for instance, would be reckoned a depressed class though he is a well-to-do trader with a percentage of literacy higher than that of the Rajput and a long standing claim to be classed as a Vaisya. Similarly the Belwar would be depressed though he claims to be a Sanadh Brahman and in some places the Sanadhs themselves admit the claim whilst the Banjara Orh and Ramaiya would all be depressed though they are served in their domestic rites by Brahmans of good status. Others regard depressed and untouchable as synonymous terms but untouchability can scar

[1] The Chandalas in early times announced their approach by striking two pieces of wood together.

[2] See Chapter V par 15.

See Chapter V par 4.

[4] In the case of *kachcha* food, the number of possible cooks is so limited, that in practice no high caste man could eat *kachcha* food cooked by anybody but his own relatives; but the principle holds good.

cely be used as a criterion now, when the idea itself is fast disappearing, whilst it was never a satisfactory criterion at any time, for a caste may be regarded as untouchable by some of the twice born, and not by others, a caste may be untouchable in one district and not in the next, and there are untouchable castes with touchable sections

Nor is untouchability the lowest possible depth of degradation Some untouchable castes—the Kori, the Bhar, the Pasi, the Dusadh—are none the less served by Brahmans as their family priests—Brahmans of low status, no doubt, but still Brahmans. They are obviously superior to those untouchables for whom no Brahman, however low, would carry out a domestic ceremony, and it is they, I suggest, that constitute the 'depressed' classes The suggestion agrees with the historical facts. At all stages of the evolution of Hinduism, there have been, on or just outside the border-line of Hindu society, a certain number of aboriginal tribes and low castes, following all sorts of primitive or unsavoury professions At all times, the Brahman priesthood has endeavoured to keep them segregated, not only from Hindu society, but from the Hindu religion and the Hindu ceremonial They were not allowed to hear, much less study, the Vedas, they must not enter the temples, they must carry out all ceremonies without using the *mantras* (sacred texts), and no Brahman would carry out any domestic ceremony (*sanskara*) for them And that is still the position. The depressed classes are those castes[1] who are not served by Brahmans, yet have shown by their attempts to secure some trivial service from Brahmans, that they are desirous of receiving their recognition, and of being admitted full members of Hindu society. And the initial step necessary to raise them out of their degradation is obviously the removal of these religious disabili-

[1] See Chapter XIV, par 26 (3) and (4) There are 25 castes in the first of the two groups numbering some 8¾ millions, and all the castes in the second group except those mentioned under sub-pars (a) and (e)—twenty in all, numbering possibly 450,000 people

ties.[1] Thereafter—if they are provided with the educational facilities that they require—they can, and they will raise themselves to a respectable position in society as other low castes have done before them The process will take time—two or three generations the mental moral and even physical characteristics which are the result of many centuries of depression are not so easily put away But though the process may be slow it will be sure

12 Supposed antagonism of caste to nationality

There are critics, Indian as well as foreign who regard caste as the root of all Hindu evils, an antiquated system fit only for the rubbish-heap of worn-out superstitions It is essentially aristocratic how can it be reconciled with modern democratic ideas? Its archaic taboos its primitive customs—how can they be reconciled with modern civilization? Its separatism rending the nation asunder into thousands of sections and sub-sections—how can it be reconciled with national unity? That indeed is the gravest charge Caste and nationality are regarded as incompatible the presence of the former must impede if it does not actually prevent the growth of the latter And at first sight, it would seem that the critics are right for caste embodies a principle of separation nationality a principle of consolidation

13 Another point of view

History suggests another point of view The primitive bonds of union between man and man are community of descent and community of material interest the former brings men together in the tribe or social class, the latter in some kind of occupational group—merchant guilds, or *collegia opificum* or trades unions To unite these groups into a nation further bonds are required—a common language a common government common political interests, and common historical traditions In India till comparatively recent times, most of these elements of unity have been wanting there have

[1] I feel all the more justified in making this statement, because one of the greatest Indians of this province, himself a Brahman who has taken up this problem assiduously has said much the same thing

always been many languages, many governments, and many political divisions, and though the constant alliances of independent rulers against a common enemy created a certain community of historical traditions, that by itself was not sufficient to arouse a national spirit. Accordingly, the primitive groups of society remained in existence and multiplied, and under the stress of circumstances, each group hardened into a closely compacted entity, separate from, occasionally antagonistic to, other groups. But through the diversity of Hindu society, there has always run a thread of unity, there has always been one bond to keep its many component parts together. This bond was the Brahman hegemony Dynasties might rise and fall, but the Brahman remained supreme; kingdoms might expand or shrink, but Hindu society, indifferent to changes in political boundaries, remained one and undivided under its natural leaders There has always been a Hindu people, there has always been a Hindu civilization, and it is the caste system that has preserved the distinctive unity of the one, and the distinctive nature of the other

14 Caste in the past and the future

Caste in the past has made for internal separatism, but it has also made for external unity. There seems no reason to suppose that, in the future, it will have any different effect Every nation must have its social system, surely it is advisable that it should maintain a system that is suited to its people And as Sir Herbert Risley has remarked, caste is more than 'a mere mode of grouping the loose atoms of humanity', it is 'a congenital instinct' There may be times when national and caste interests will clash, when somebody may cry 'I am a casteman first, and an Indian afterwards' That has often happened, in many nations, it is seldom a dangerous cry, for—*ex hypothesi*—the rest of the nation is on the other side And it should be even less dangerous than usual in India, since the leaders of society will also be the national leaders Much, indeed, will depend upon the Brahman It is the fashion of the people to jeer at him in proverbs, of critics to

decry him as a parasite on society But it is as unfair to judge of a caste by the conduct of its least important members as it is to judge of the doctrines of a religion by the practice of the mass of its adherents And, mean time there are in Benares and Allahabad, Brahman scholars whose names are a household word in East and West, wherever two or three Sanskritists are gathered together and at the present time every single Hindu political leader of first class importance in this province is a Brahman In the days that are coming the Brahman will have the greatest chance that he has had for two thousand years And he will take it

15 Conclusion

It seems probable that in the course of time, the nation will swallow up the caste that the customary restrictions will be gradually modified till the social system becomes again one of classes as it was in Vedic times So be it One thing however is certain that any attempt to hasten the processes of evolution would be fraught with danger Suddenly to remove the caste system would in Sir Herbert Risley's phrase be more than a revolution it would resemble the removal of some elemental force like gravitation or molecular attraction There are no doubt customs that should go—customs that are definitely harmful customs that in modern conditions have become ridiculous But as has been shown these are mere accidental excrescences that can be removed without harming the substance of the caste system What is required is a pruning knife not an axe

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVI

The clever Dusadh girl and the Brahman

story R jgi was full of paddy while outside not a blade f paddy was t be found owing to want f rain. It being reported to Indra that within R jgir enough of paddy had been grown to stave off famine, he ordered an army of mice and rats to be sent to destroy the crops; but the girl, informed of this order by her parrot, got her husband to procure an army of cats as guard; when it was reported to Indra that thi plan of destroying the crops had failed, he directed that when cut, each load of the paddy sheaves should produce only one-and-a-quarter *seer* of clea paddy The gi l informed by her parrot of this order directed her husband to make bundles of only two stalks of paddy each tied end to end. The order of Indra having gone forth and become irrevocable, each of these bundles produced one-and-a-quarter *ers* of paddy Indra informed of this and seeing himself out witted, ordered a furious storm to blow and scatter all the paddy which had been threshed out ready for storing The girl informed of this and aware that no wattle hut would resist the storm should he store it in such, directed her husband to dig the deep moat now seen round Rajgir When the storm blew it naturally carried all the paddy into these trenches where it lay safe till the storm had blown over and thus was the country saved from famine through the cleverness of this girl, in memory of whom the pool where her pigs used to wallow was named Bawan Ganga or the fifty-two Ganges.

(Crooke *Tribes and Castes f the N W.P and Oudh* Vol. II pp. 347-8.)

APPENDIX I

List of Caste Names found in the text

Abbasi	Section, both of Saiyids and Shaikhs
Abidi	Saiyid section
Adham	Ahir subdivision
Adham Sudia	Ahir subcaste
Adhela	Kanjar subcaste
Afghan	Synonym for Pathan
Afridi	Pathan tribe
Agari or *Agri*	Iron smelters, a section of hill-Doms
Agariya	(1) Caste of iron smelters in Mirzapur, (2) Caste of salt-workers in Bulandshahr
Agarwal	Vaisya caste of traders and bankers
Agastwar	Rajput sept
Agnikula	Lit 'fire-born', name of a group of Rajput septs
Agrahri	Vaisya caste of traders, mostly provision dealers
Agri	See *Agari*
Ahar	Pastoral and cultivating caste
Aheriya	Caste of hunters and fowlers
Ahir	Caste of herdsmen, also agriculturists
Ahiwasi	Brahmanical caste
Ajudhyabasi	'Living in Ajudhya', a subcaste name in various castes
Alwi or *Alawiya*	Section, both of Saiyids and Shaikhs
Amethiya	Rajput sept
Amisht	Subcaste name in various castes
Ansari	Shaikh section
Arakh	Caste of cultivators and labourers
Asandhari	Branch of the Goshain sectarian caste
Askari	Saiyid section
Athpahariya	Gidhiya subcaste
Atith	Sectarian (Saiva) caste
Audhiya	Tribe of criminals
Auji	Tailors and drummers, section of hill-Doms

Bachgoti	Rajput sept
Badhik	(1) Vagrant tribe originally dacoits (2) Subcaste of Dhanuks
Badi	Dancers and singers section of hill Doms
Badi Banjara	New caste, formed from the Gual Nats
Baghban	Caste of gardeners
Baghel	Rajput sept
Baheliya	Caste of fowlers and hunters
Bahlim	Shaikh subdivision
Bahlima	See *Bahlim*
Bahmangot	Of Brahman lineage subcaste name
Bahmaniya	See *Bahmangot*
Bahrup	Subcaste of Banjaras
Baid	Subcaste of Banjaras
Bair	See *Rurlya*
Baidguar	Subcaste of Banjaras
Bairsawa	Group of hill-Doms
Bais	Rajput sept
Baiswar	Tribe of agriculturists
Bajaniya	Nat subcaste
Bajdhar	Baheliya subcaste
Bajgi	Caste of musicians
Bakhariya	Group of hill Doms
Bal	Subcaste of Arakhs and Khangars
Balahar	Dom subcaste of village menials and trumpeters
Balai	Caste of weavers and labourers
Balmiki	Bhangi subcaste
Bangash	Pathan tribe
Bani Fatima	Saiyid section
Bani Israil	Shaikh section
Baniya	Generic term for trader formerly used as caste name for Vaisya castes
Banjara	Tribe of cattle dealers and carriers
Banmanus	Subcaste of Musahars
Bansphor	Dom subcaste who work in bamboo
Baqarqassab	Group of Muhammadan butchers lit goat killers
Baqri	Saiyid section
Bar or Padhan	Section of the lower Moradabad Chauhans
Baraghar	Lit. twelve houses a caste section

Barai	(1) Caste of betel growers, (2) another form of Barele
Barakzai	Pathan tribe
Baramasi	(1) Name for Kachhi, (2) section of Baghbans
Baranwal	Subcaste of Vaisya traders
Bardhiya	Subcaste of Kumhars
Barech	Pathan tribe
Barele or *Bare*	Section of hill-Doms
Bargahi	Caste of domestic servants
Bargujar	Rajput sept
Barhai	Caste of carpenters
Bari	Caste of domestic servants
Baruri	See *Ruriya*
Barwar	Criminal tribe
Basor	Dom subcaste of bamboo workers
Baura	A group of hill-Doms
Bauriya	See *Bawariya*
Bawanjati	Lit 'fifty-two families', a caste section
Bawariya	Tribe of hunters and criminals
Bazigar	'Acrobat', subcaste name
Bediya	See *Beriya*
Bekanwala	Khatik subcaste (bacon-vendors)
Beldar	Caste of diggers and earthworkers
Belwal	See *Ghidwal*
Belwar	Caste of grain-dealers
Benbansi	'Descended from Ben', subcaste name
Bengali	Vagrant tribe
Beriya	Vagrant tribe
Bhains	Subcaste both of Kanjars and Beriyas
Bhaktiha	Murao subcaste
Bhale Sultan	Sept of Muhammadan Rajputs
Bhand	Caste of jesters
Bhangi	Scavenger caste (or group of castes)
Bhantu	Dangerous criminal tribe, now broken up, and mostly settled in the Andamans
Bhar	Non-Aryan tribe of agriculturists and labourers
Bharbhunja	Grain parchers
Bhat	Caste of bards and genealogists
Bhathiyara	Caste of innkeepers
Bhatiya	Small caste of traders
Bhatnagar	A Kayastha subcaste

Bhatra	Another name for Ramaiya
Bhatti	Rajput sept
Bhil	Old aboriginal tribe
Bhishti	Caste of water-carriers
Bhoksa	Tribe resident in the submontane Tarai
Bhotiya	Tribe of agriculturists (Hinduized Tibetans)
Bhuinhar	Caste of landowners and agriculturists who claim Brahman descent
Bhuiya	Jungle and labouring tribe
Bhuiyar	Tribe of woodcutters and jungle dwellers
Bhul	Oil pressers a section of the hill-Doms
Biloch	Muhammadan tribe frequently criminals
Bind	Agricultural caste
Bisa	Twenties Agarwal endogamous section
Bisen	Rajput sept
Bishnoi	Originally a Vaishnava sect now a sectarian caste
Brahman	The priestly caste also an Aryan *varna* or social class
Brajbasi	Living in Braj i e. the country near Agra and Muttra[1] subcaste name
Bughara	Section of hill-Doms
Bundela	Rajput sept
Byahut	Wedded (i e. marrying only virgins) subcaste name
Byar	Tribe of agriculturists
Chagatai	(1) Turki family name (2) Moghul section
Chai	Caste of fishermen
Chamar	Caste of curriers and tanners
Chamargaur	Rajput sept
Chamar Julaha	Another name for Bhuiyar
Chanal	Another name for Chunara
Chandel	Rajput sept
Charghar	Lit. four houses caste subdivision
Chattri	Synonym for Rajput
Chaube	Brahman title

Chaudhri	Lit 'headman' (1) common title for (a) headman of a caste, (b) a Jat, (2) a subcaste of Nats
Chauhan	Rajput sept
Chauhaniya-Misr	Subcaste name
Chero	Caste of labourers
Chhajarwar	Section of Baghbans
Chhipi	Caste of calico printers
Chik	Caste of Hindu butchers
Chiryamar	Subcaste of Baheliyas, fowlers
Chishti	Saiyid section
Chunara, Chunera, Chunyar	Section of hill-Doms
Churihar	Caste of makers of glass bangles
Dafali	Caste of drummers, beggars and hedge priests
Dakaut	Caste of astrologers
Dalera	Caste of pickpockets
Damai	Drummers, group of hill-Doms
Dangi	Caste of agriculturists
Darya	Section of hill-Doms
Darzi	Caste of tailors
Dasa	'Tens', Agarwal endogamous section
Daudzai	Pathan tribe
Dhaigar	Lit 'two and a half houses', (1) a hypergamous division amongst Khattris, (2) a subcaste of Gadariyas
Dhaki	Outcasted Khasiyas; section of hill-Doms
Dhangar	Tribe of agricultural labourers
Dhanuk	Menial caste
Dhankuta Banjara	See *Kuta Banjara*
Dharhi	Caste of singers and dancers
Dharkar	Dom subcaste, workers in cane
Dhiman	Subcaste of Barhais
Dhimar	Caste broken off from the Kahar
Dhinwar	Subcaste of Khagis
Dhobi	Washerman caste
Dholi	Tailors, drummers, section of hill-Doms
Dhunar or *Dhuni*	Labourers, section of hill-Doms
Dhuniya	Caste of cotton carders

Dhusar Bhargava	Caste of Brahmanical origin
Dikhit	Rajput sept
Dilazak	Pathan tribe
Dobhal	Section of Khasiya Brahmans (exorcists)
Dogar	Punjab tribe
Dolkarha	Section of Musahars palanquin bearers
Dom	(1) In the plains, a non-Aryan tribe of menials and scavengers (2) in the hills generic racial name for low castes of all kinds
Domar	Dom subcaste
Durani	Pathan tribe
Dusadh	Menial caste
Dwijat	Twice-born Ahir subcaste
Faruqi	Shaikh section
Gadariya	Caste of shepherds and goat-herds
Gaddi	Caste of Muhammadan cow herds
Gadhere	Subcaste of Kumhars
Gaharwar	Rajput sept
Gahlot	Rajput sept
Gahoi	Subcaste of Vaisya traders and merchants
Gairola	Section of Brahmans in hills
Gandharb	Caste of singers and prostitutes
Gandhi	Caste of scent manufacturers
Gandhila	(1) Subcaste of Gidhiyas (2) vagrant tribe
Gangari	Subcaste of Brahmans in hills
Gara	Tribe of cultivators
Gaur	Subcaste of Brahmans Kayasthas and many other castes
Gauriya	Caste of fishermen and cultivators
Gautam	Rajput sept
Ghaibhananiya	Brahman subcaste in hills
Gharbari	Branch of Atiths
Gharuk	Caste of domestic servants who serve Europeans
Ghasiya	Tribe of menials

Ghildwal	Section of Khasiya (hill) Brahmans
Ghilzai	Pathan tribe
Ghogar	A newly formed caste; well diggers
Ghorawal	(1) Subcaste of Qalandars, (2) subcaste of Khatiks
Ghorgushti	Pathan tribe
Ghori	(1) Pathan tribe, (2) a Muslim dynasty
Ghosi	Caste of herdsmen
Ghulam	Lit 'slave'; subcaste name of Barwars
Gidhiya	New caste of hunters
Gola	Subcaste of Bawariyas
Gola Agariya	'Bastard Agariya', a Luniya subcaste
Gola Thakur	'Bastard Rajput', another name for Gola Agariya
Golapurab	Caste of agriculturists
Gond	Aboriginal tribe of Central India
Gorchha	Caste of cultivators
Goshain	Sectarian caste
Grihastha	Lit 'householder', branch of Goshains
Gual	Nat subcaste
Gujar	Agricultural and pastoral tribe
Habshi	Descendants of Abyssinian slaves, now extinct
Habura	Tribe of criminal vagrants
Haldiya	Subcaste name, connected with turmeric (*haldi*)
Halwai	Caste of confectioners
Hankya	Subcaste of Kumhars
Hasan-Husaini	Saiyid section
Hasani	Saiyid section
Hashimi	Section of both Saiyids and Shaikhs
Hateriya	Subcaste of Kumhars
Hayobans	Rajput sept
Hazari	bcaste of Khatiks
Hela	angi section, probably a separate caste
Hurkiya	ste of attendants on dancing girls
Husaini	iyid section
Intpaz	Subcaste of Kumhars
Iraqi	Caste of Muhammadan liquor sellers

Jadon	Rajput sept
Jadubansi	Subcaste name
Jafari	Section both of Saiyids and Shaikhs
Jaiswala Jaiswara	Lit. residents of Jais subcaste name
Jalali	Saiyid section
Jallad	Subcaste of Kanjars
Jamoriya	Group of hill Doms
Jaunpuriya	Lit. residents of Jaunpur subcaste name
Janwar	Rajput sept
Jat	Agricultural tribe
Jatiya	Subdivision of Chamars
Jauhari	Jeweller subcaste name
Jhijhotiya	Subcaste of Brahmans
Jhojha	Caste of converted Hindus cultivators
Jogi Pathan	Vagrant Muhammadan swindlers
Joshi	Class of Brahmans in the hills caste of astrologers
Julaha	Caste of weavers
Kabariya	See *Kunjra*
Kabutari	Lit. pigeon like subcaste name
Kachhi	Caste of market gardeners
Kachhwaha	Rajput sept
Kadhera	Tribe of cultivators
Kahar	Caste of domestic servants
Kakar	Pathan tribe
Kalabaz	Subcaste of Gual Nats
Kalwar	Liquor distillers and sellers and general traders
Kamboh	Caste of cultivators
Kamchor	Lit. loafer subcaste name
Kamkar	Caste of domestic servants
Kanaujiya	(1) Subcaste of Brahmans (2) subcaste of Bharbhunjas
Kanchan	Singers dancers and prostitutes subcaste of Gual Nats
Kandu	Caste of shopkeepers
Kanet	Rajput sept
Kanghigar	Combmakers subcaste of Nats
Kanhpuriya	Rajput sept
Kanjar	Vagrant tribe

Kanmail	Caste of 'ear-cleaners', broken off from the Nats
Kanseri	Section of Khasiya Brahmans in hills
Kanya-Kubja	See *Kanaujiya*
Karona	Subcaste of Baghbans
Karwal	Vagrant tribe
Kasarwani	Caste of traders, mostly grocers
Kasaundhan	Caste of merchants and money-changers
Kasera	Brass founders
Kasgar	Subcaste of Kumhars
Kasibi	Section of the Bishnoi caste
Kathak	Caste of musicians
Kathiyara	Caste of bricklayers
Kausik	(1) Rajput sept, (2) name of a *gotra*
Kayastha	Caste of writers
Kayastha-Bharbhunja	New caste, of Kayasthas who have taken to grain-parching
Kayastha-Darzi	New caste, of Kayasthas who have become tailors
Kayastha-Mochi	New caste, of Kayasthas who have taken to saddlery
Kayastha-Senduriya	New caste, of Kayasthas who sell red lead
Kayasthbans	'Of Kayastha stock', subcaste name
Kazimi	Saiyid section
Kewat	Caste of fishermen and boatmen
Khagar	See *Khangar*
Khagi	(1) Caste of agriculturists, (2) exogamous section of Bawariyas
Khagi-Chauhan	Mixed caste of cultivators
Khaikut	A section of hill-Doms
Khairwa	Tribe of catechu makers
Khalil	Pathan tribe
Khandelwal	Caste of Vaisya merchants and traders
Khangar	Caste of village watchmen and menials
Khanzada	Sept of Muhammadan Rajputs
Khapariya	Beggars and pedlars
Kharadi	'Turner', subcaste name
Khare	'Pure' as opposed to 'half-breed', used as sectional name in various castes (e g *Sansiya*)
Kharot	Caste of mat makers
Kharwar	Agricultural tribe

Khas	Section of Kayasthas
Khasiya	Subcaste of Brahmans and Rajputs in the hills
Khatak	Pathan tribe
Khatik	Caste of cultivators vegetable sellers and butchers
Khatkul	Endogamous section amongst Kanaujiya Brahmans
Khattri	Trading caste
Khilji	(1) Subcaste name (2) Turki tribe (3) a Muslim dynasty
Khokhar	Subcaste of Qalandars
Khumra	Millstone cutters a small caste
Khurasani	Shaikh section
Khwaja Mansuri	Subcaste of Khatiks
Kingariya	Caste of singers and dancers
Kirar	Agricultural caste
Kisan	Caste of cultivators
Koeri	Caste of cultivators mostly market gardeners
Kol	Jungle and labouring tribe
Koli	A group of hill Doms
Kori	Caste of weavers
Korwa	Jungle tribe
Kshatriya	A *varna* the Aryan ruling and military class
Kumhar	Caste of potters
Kunchband Kunch *bandhiya*	Subcaste name (*Kanjar* and *Beriya*)
Kunera	Caste of turners
Kunjra	Caste of greengrocers
Kurmi	Important agricultural caste
Kurmiya	Ahir subcaste
Kuta	Banjara subdivision
Kuta Banjara	A newly formed caste of carriers and cultivators
Kuta Mali	Caste of rice pounders
Labana	Subcaste of Banjaras
Lakhera	See *Churihar*
Lal Begi	Section of Bhangis probably now a caste
Lalkhani	Caste of Muhammadan Rajputs

Lalsoti	Exogamous section of Minas
Lama-Negi	Sept descended from Tibetan lamas settled in Garhwal
Laungbarsa	Subcaste name of Dhanuks
Lodha	Caste of agriculturists
Lodi	(1) Pathan tribe, (2) a Muslim dynasty
Lohar	Blacksmiths
Luniya	Caste of cultivators, earthworkers, and makers of saltpetre
Madhesiya Vaisya	Name claimed by Kandus and Halwais
Maghaya Dom	Branch of the Dom tribe
Mahaburiya	'Followers of Mahabir', subcaste name
Mahabrahman	Brahmans who receive funeral gifts
Mahajan	Subcaste of Vaisyas, usurped as a caste name by Kalwars
Mahalodha	Subcaste of Lodhas
Mahar	Subcaste of Kahars
Mahesri	Caste of Vaisya merchants
Mair	Subcaste of Sonars
Maithila	Subcaste of Brahmans
Majhwar	Jungle and labouring tribe
Mal	Section of Sainthwars
Mali	Caste of gardeners
Malkana	Group of converts to Islam, resident around Agra
Malla	Section of Sansiyas
Mallah	Boating and fishing caste
Manihar	See *Churihar*
Mansuri	Khatik section
Mathdhari	Branch of Goshains
Mehtariya	Subcaste of Dhuniyas
Meo	Tribe of cultivators
Mewafarosh	Subcaste of fruitsellers
Milki	Shaikh section
Mina	See *Meo*
Mirasi	Caste of singers and musicians. Also called *Dom Mirasi*
Mochi	Caste of cobblers and shoemakers
Moghul	(1) Class of Muhammadans, (2) name given to the Tartar invaders of India, (3) dynasty founded by Babar
Mohmand	Pathan tribe

Muhammadzai	Pathan tribe
Mukeri	Subcaste of Banjaras
Mula	New Muhammadan caste
Murao	Caste of cultivators
Musahar	Tribe of jungle dwellers
Nagar	Subcaste of Brahmans
Nai	Caste of barbers
Naik	Subcaste of Banjaras
Namdeobansi	Subcaste of Chhipis
Nanakshahi	Subcaste name
Nandbansi	Subcaste name
Naqwi	Saiyid section
Nat	Vagrant tribe of acrobats, dancers etc.
Nikhad	Subcaste name
Nikhar	Gadariya subcaste
Niyariya	Caste of refiners of precious metals
Ojha	Subcaste of Brahman diviners and exorcists
Orakzai	Pathan tribe
Orh	Caste of weavers and petty tradesmen
Oswal	Caste of Vaisya merchants
Pachhada	Exogamous section of Bawariya castes
Pachhami	Western subcaste name
Pachpiriya	Followers of Panchpir subcaste name
Pahari Pahariya Pahri	Caste or tribe of watchmen group of hill Doms
Panchdravid	One of two large groups of Brahmans (the southern group)
Panchgaur	One of two large groups of Brahmans (the northern group)
Pande	Brahman title
Panka	Caste of weavers
Pankhiya	Group of Muhammadan cultivators
Pant	Lit. religious order class of Brahmans in the hills
Panwar	Rajput sept
Parahiya	Jungle tribe

Rastogi	Subcaste of Vaisya merchants
Rasyar	Subcaste of Khasiya Brahmans
Rathor	Rajput sept
Rauniyar	Caste of traders mostly in sugar and salt
Rind	Criminal tribe
Ringwara Rawat	Sept of hill Rajputs
Riswi or *Raswi*	Saiyid section
Rohilla	Lit. hillmen Pathan tribe or group of tribes resident in Rohilkhand
Ror	Caste of cultivators
Ruhela	See *Rohilla*
Runa	Basket makers group of hill-Doms
Sadh	Originally a unitarian sect, now a sectarian caste
Saharya	Tribe of jungle dwellers
Saini	Caste of cultivators
Sainthwar	New caste of cultivators separated from the Kurmis
Saiqalgar	Caste of armourers and knife grinders
Saiyid	Division of Muhammadans, descendants of Ali and Fatima
Sakarwar	Rajput sept
Saksena	Subcaste of Kayasthas
Saktina	Murao subcaste
Sanadh	Subcaste of Brahmans
Sanaurhiya	Criminal tribe
Sani	Subcaste of Baghbans
Sansiya	Vagrant criminal tribe
Saraswat	Subcaste of Brahmans
Sarki	Workers in leather a group of hill Doms
Sarola	Group of hill Brahmans
Sarwariya	Subcaste of Brahmans
Satnami	Another name for the Sadh caste
Sejwari	Caste of domestic servants
Senapanthi	Subcaste of Nais
Seth	Section of Bishnois
Shaikh	(1) One of the principal Muhammadan divisions (2) Seth q v
Shaikh-Mehtar	Subcaste of Bhangis

Shershahi	Subcaste name, from the Afghan king Sher Shah
Siddiqi	Section of both Shaikhs and Saiyids
Singharia	New caste of groundnut growers
Singiwala	Subcaste of Nat
Soeri	A caste of labourers
Solanki	Rajput sept
Sombansi	Rajput sept
Sonkatta	Subcaste of Khatiks
Sonar	Caste of goldsmiths
Sonkhar	Subcaste of Khatiks
Srivastava	Subcaste of Kayasthas and other castes
Sudra	A varna: the Aryan labouring and menial class
Sulaimani	Shaikh section
Sutang	'Master' (slang), subcaste of Barwars
Taga	Caste of landowners and agriculturists
Teral	Subcaste of Khatik
Tajik	(1) A Moghul section, (2) name given to original Persian inhabitants of Afghanistan by the Muslims
Tamboli	Caste of betel growers and sellers
Tamta	Coppersmiths, a group of hill-Doms
Tank	Subcaste of Sonars
Taqvi	Saiyid section
Tarin	Pathan tribe
Tarkihar	Caste of makers of ornaments
Tawaif	Caste of dancers and prostitutes
Teli	Caste of oil-pressers and general traders
Teliyabans	'Of Teli stock', subcaste name
Thakur-Irakh	Mixed caste in Cawnpore
Tharu	Tribe residing in the Tarai, agriculturists
Thathera	Caste of brass workers
Tilam	A Barwar subcaste
Tirua	Tinsmiths and knife grinders, a group of hill-Doms
Todar Mali	Subcaste name, from Akbar's minister, Raja Todar Mal
Tomar	Rajput sept
Turai	Subcaste of Bawariyas

Turaiha	Bhangi subcaste, probably now a caste
Turi	Trumpeters a group of hill Doms
Turk	A caste of agriculturists
Turkiya	Subcaste of Banjaras
Turkman	Moghul section
Umar	Caste of Vaisya dealers and traders
Unyal	Section of Gangari hill Brahmans
Upadhya	Brahman title
Usmani	Shaikh section
Uttam	Ahir subdivision
Usbak or *Usbeg*	(1) Turki tribe (2) a Moghul section
Vaisya	A *varna* the Aryan middle class
Yusufzai	Pathan tribe
Zaidi	Saiyid section

APPENDIX II

Glossary of Vernacular Terms

[illegible]	Father
[illegible] badla	(Marriage by) exchange
[illegible]	Mehman (corrupt form)
[illegible]	Foreigner
[illegible]	A school of Shia law (Muhammadan)
[illegible]	Lit. 'family name', used as name of a section of a caste
[illegible] jadida	New nobility
Araq	Liquor
[illegible]	A form of Hindu marriage
[illegible]	Client, usually, tenant of land
[illegible]	A demon
Aurat	Woman, wife
Avatar	Incarnation (i.e. of Vishnu)
Badshah	Lit. 'king'. Term for caste headman
Baghaut	Ghost of person killed by a tiger
Bahu	Son's wife
Baiga	The priest of certain low castes
Ba'isi	Lit. 'twenty-two' (villages). Jurisdiction of a caste council
Bāni	Lit. 'fabric', used by Halwais as name of their sections
Bani Hashim	Sons of Hashim, the section of the Qureshi tribe to which the Prophet belonged
Bankā	Knife (for splitting bamboos)
Bans	Lit. 'genealogy', used as a name for a section of a caste
Barachha	See *Barrekhi*
Barrekhi	Exchange, the payment of money at marriage among certain castes
Batua	Cooking pot
Bera	Lit. 'enclosure'. Jurisdiction of a caste council

Beta	Son
Bhai	Brother
Bhaiband	See *Biradari*
Bhaiya	See *Bhai* (diminutive)
Bhakti	Devotion
Bhakti-marga	Vaishnava doctrine of personal devotion
Bhauji	Brother's wife
Bhit	Conservatory where betel is grown
Bhut	Ghost
Bir	A Hindu hero
Biradari or *bhaiband*	Brotherhood
Bithlai	See *Rakhni*
Brahmă	Prayer
Brahmā	The universal spirit
Brahmana	Commentary to the Vedas
Brit	Caste dues
Burna	Ghost of a person drowned
Byah	Marriage
Byaha Byahi (fem.)	Married
Chacha Chachi (fem.)	Father's brother or sister
Chachera	Descended through the paternal uncle
Chakrayat	Derivation uncertain (Query servant?) A caste official
Chandala	Outcaste tribe (Puranic)
Charhawa	Form of marriage
Charidar	Lit. wand-bearer A caste official
Charpir	Four *pirs* or Muslim saints
Chatai	Lit. matting Jurisdiction of a caste council
Chauka	Cooking place
Chela	Disciple or spiritual heir
Chhota bhaiya	Lit. little brother A caste official
Chobdar	Lit. mace-bearer Term for caste official
Chulha	Fire-place oven
Chupatti	Griddle cake
Dada dadi (fem.)	Father's father or mother
Daiva	Form of Hindu marriage (obsolete)
Darogha	Lit. superintendent A caste official

Dau	Elder brother A name for the god Baladeva
Deohar	The village gods collectively
Deorani	Husband's younger brother's wife
Dewar	Husband's younger brother
Dharauna	Form of marriage, used for widows
Dharewa	Form of marriage, used for widows
Dhari	Lit 'upholder' Term for caste official
Dharmashastra	Learned in the law
Dharmsala	Charitable institution, usually a rest-house for travellers and pilgrims
Dharna	Sitting at an enemy's door without eating to extort something from him, an old Brahman habit, now forbidden by law
Dhebra	An official in a Barwar criminal gang
Diwan	Lit 'minister' Term for caste official
Dola	Lit 'a swing' A form of marriage
Dua-kunat	Prayer of praise
Dudh bachake	Lit 'avoiding the milk', i e avoiding blood relationship
Dudh ke natedar	'Milk' (i e blood) relations
Dudhabati	Lit 'rice and milk', see *Khichari*
Dvija	Twice born
Faqih	Theologian
Faqir	Beggar, religious mendicant
Gagara	Pot
Gandharva	Form of Hindu marriage (obsolete)
Ganw ka bhai	Lit 'village brother', fellow villager
Gauhatiya	Cow-killing
Gauna	The bringing home of the wife to her husband
Gaurochana	Yellow preparation derived from the cow
Geru	Ochre
Ghardamada	See *Gharjanwai*
Gharjaiyan	See *Gharjanwai*
Gharjanwai	Lit 'son in law at home', marriage after payment of dowry by service
Ghat	Bathing place

Ghi	Clarified butter
Ghol	Lit a company Term for a section of caste
Gidh	Kite
Gilas	Glass or cup
Got	See *Gotra*
Gotra	Lit race, family Used as a name for an exogamous section of a caste, especially a twice born caste
Gurawat	Marriage by exchange
Guru	A spiritual preceptor
Haldi	Turmeric
Hanafi	A school of Sunni law (Muhammadan)
Hasab	Personal qualifications
Hatya	Killing especially killing of a cow or a Brahman
Hauliya	Name of the Bawariya headman
Hijra	Eunuch
Hina jacco —jatiyo —sippam	Low born low caste low trade
Hom	Burnt offering
Ilaqa	Lit estate Jurisdiction of a caste council
Isai	Christian (*Isa* = Jesus)
Izzat	Honour prestige
Jadu	Magic charms
Jagiya	Purificatory ceremony
Jaini	Follower of the Jain religion
Jajman	A client, patron
Jamadar	Arabic term Lit. leader of an assembly Term for caste headman
Janamashtami	Festival of Krishna s birth
Janeo	Sacred thread of the twice born
Jataka	Buddhist folk tale
Jaziya	Muslim poll-tax on Hindus—abolished by Akbar
Jeth	Husband s elder brother
Jethi mehraru	Senior wife

Jumala	Lit 'aggregate, total', a meeting
Juwar	Derivation uncertain Jurisdiction of a caste council
Kachcha	Lit 'uncooked, raw' Food cooked with water Also used in figurative senses
Kailnama	Agreement
Kalchhal	Spoon
Kamarband	Broad belt (cummerbund)
Kanva	Name of a dynasty
Kanyadan	Giving away the bride
Karao	See *Dharewa*
Karma	Law of automatic retribution
Karta	Managing member of a Hindu joint family
Katha	Sacred recitation
Katora	Saucer
Khichari	Ceremony where the bridal pair eat together
Kitabi	Follower of a revealed religion, i.e a religion with a sacred book
Kohabar	Retiring room (in the marriage ceremony)
Kotwal	Lit 'keeper of a city', chief police officer or magistrate A caste official
Kul	Lit 'assembly' Used as a name for a section of a caste, in its sense of 'family'
Kuladevi	Family goddess
Kunchbandhi	Dialect of the Kunchband Kanjars
Kundi	Cauldron
Kuri	Lit 'a class or branch' Used by Agariyas as a name for their sections
Lagan	Marriage season
Lala	Kayastha title
Lota	Drinking vessel
Mahajan	Merchant
Mahant	Head of an ascetic body

Mahati	See *Mahto*
Mahto	Lit. headman A caste official
Malik	A king
Mamera	Descended through the maternal uncle
Manro	Wedding shed (in the marriage ceremony)
Mantra	Text from the Vedas a sacred formula
Mashk	Water bag of leather
Matmangara	Collection of earth (a marriage rite)
Maulvi	Muhammadan doctor of law
Mausera	Descended through the maternal aunt
Mazdur	Labourer
Mehraru	Wife
Mehtar	Lit prince Term (1) for caste headman (2) for a Bhangi sweeper
Mehtarani	Female sweeper
Mlechchha	Foreigner barbarian outcaste
Mufti	Muslim lawyer or jurisconsult
Muhajirin	Exiles—name given to the Prophet s followers from Mecca
Muhalla	Quarter (of a town)
Mujtahid	A superior in religious matters, priest (usually Shia)
Mukhiya	Lit. headman A caste official
Mukhtar	Lit. attorney delegate A caste official
Mul	Lit. root Used as name of a section of a caste
Muni	A saint or sage a title applied to the Rishis
Munran	Shaving of the head a Hindu family rite
Munsif	Lit. arbitrator Term for caste official
Muqaddam	Lit. preceding Term for caste headman
Muta	Temporary of marriages under Shia law (Muhammadan)
Naib	Lit. substitute lieutenant A caste official
Naib-sarpanch	Lit. substitute headman A caste official

Naik	Lit 'headman, overseer' A caste official
Nalband	Farrier
Narial	Lit 'cocoa nut', used as a pipe
Nasab	Lineage
Nau-Muslim	Generic term for a convert to Islam, lit 'new Muslim'
Nikas	Lit 'origin', used as a name for a section of a caste
Nilgar	Worker in indigo
Nishada	An outcaste tribe (Puranic)
Niyoga	Lit 'authorized', i e *to raise up seed* upon a wife Name of this custom
Nukh	Name of section of Bhatiya caste
Ola	Hail, hail-storm
Padhan	Corrupt for Pradhan, lit 'chief' Term for caste headman
Pahlwan	Wrestler, champion
Pakhtana	Pushtu language
Pakka	Lit 'cooked, ripe' Food cooked with ghi or milk
Pāl	Lit 'a tent', used by Jats as name of their sections
Panch	Member of a panchayat
Pancha-gavya	Five products of the cow
Pandit	Lit 'learned', title of a Brahman
Pangat	Lit 'a line or row', used by Bansphors as name of their sections
Panwpuja	Lit 'worshipping' (i e washing) the feet of the bridegroom by the bride's father
Paramatman	Universal self
Parda or *purdah*	'Curtain', the custom of seclusion of women
Parwana	Written order
Pashtana	See *Pakhtana*
Patwari	Keeper of village revenue records Also, a caste official
Pet manganiya	Womb betrothal, i e betrothal of unborn children, conditionally on their being of opposite sexes

Pheri bhaunwar	Circumambulation of the marriage shed
Phuphera	Descended through the paternal aunt
Piada	Lit. *footman* Term for caste official
Pir	Muhammadan saint
Pipacha	Form of Hindu marriage (obsolete)
Pipal	*Ficus religiosa* the holy fig tree
Pota	Grandson
Pravara	Group of *gōtras* having sacrificial fires in common
Pret	Sprite
Purka log	Old people
Purohit	Family priest
Purohiti	Priesthood priestly dues
Qalaigar	Tinsmith
Qaum	Tribe or caste (Arabic)
Qazi	The (Muhammadan) judge who acts as marriage registrar
Rai	Lit prince A caste official
Rakhni	Concubine
Rakshasa	(1) Form of Hindu marriage marriage by capture (2) demon
Randua	Widower also used of an old bachelor
Ranpi	Cobbler s tool
Rasbarag	Comparison of horoscopes
Rishi	Lit. a sage or poet a mythological being
Rudraksha	Berry of the tree *eleocarpus janitrus* used for rosaries
Sabha	Association
Sadhu	Ascetic
Saga	Own or full relative
Sagai	See *Dharewa*
Sahua	Headman of a Barwar criminal gang
Sahukar	Lit. honest man banker or money lender
Saiva	Worshipper of Siva
Sakha	Body of persons following a particular school of Vedic teaching

Sakti	The principle of female energy, personified as goddess
Salam alaikum	Peace be with you (Muslim greeting)
Salokya	Dwelling in the same place as God, a form of bliss
Samaj	Association
Samipya	Dwelling in the presence of God, a form of bliss
Sannyasi	Ascetic
Sansara	Transmigration
Sanskāra	Domestic rite (birth, marriage, etc)
Sapinda	Lit 'having the same pinda or funeral cake', a relative within seven generations
Saqqa	Water carrier
Saqui	Derivation uncertain, term for caste headman
Sarai	A caravansary
Saraogi	Synonym for Jaini, q v
Sardar	Lit 'leader' A caste official
Sarmaur	Lit 'crowned head' A caste official
Sarpanch	Lit 'head of the council of five' Generic term for caste headman
Sarupya	Acquiring the form of god, a form of bliss
Sati	Lit 'the faithful wife' (who burns herself with her husband's corpse)
Sayujya	Absorption in the universal spirit
Sendurdan	Marking the bride with red lead
Shafei	A school of Sunni Law (Muhammadan)
Shahid	Witness to the faith, martyr (Muhammadan)
Shahzadi	Princess
Shia	One of the two principal divisions of Muhammadans
Shikari	Hunter
Shīn	The letter 'sh'
Sīn	The letter 's'
Sipahi	Lit 'soldier' A caste official
Siwai	One-fourth extra
Sraddha	Hindu sacrifice for the benefit of ancestors
Sufi	Free thinker (Muhammadan)

Sunni	One of the two principal divisions of Muhammadans
Takawan	(Silver) contribution at a wedding
Takht	Lit. throne A caste headman
Thali	Dish
That	Lit frame work a name used by hill Brahmans for their sections
Thok	Lit company Jurisdiction of a caste council
Tikligar	Spangle maker
Tilak	Gift of the dowry
Tirath	Pilgrimage
Vadhaka	Murderer (Sanskrit)
Vaishnava	Worshipper of Vishnu
Vakil	Lit. attorney or delegate A caste official
Vanaprasta	Hermit
Varna	Lit. colour one of the four Aryan social classes
Varnasankara	One of Manu s mixed castes
Vijaya homa	Name of a Goshain rite
Vyavastha	A declaration of law a Brahmanical ruling
Vratya	Name given to certain castes by Manu
Vrisala	Name given to certain castes by Manu
Wajib-ul-arz	Record of village customs
Wali	Guardian (especially in respect of marriage)
Wazir	Lit. minister A caste official
Zargar	Jeweller
Zat	Lit. breed used for caste (Arabic)

GENERAL INDEX

[*N B* 1 *References are to pages* 2 *As there is a separate list of caste names found in the text (pages 341-356), only those castes are mentioned here regarding which some important statement is made* 3 *The glossary of vernacular terms, similarly, makes it unnecessary to show them here* 4 *As 'caste' is mentioned on almost every page in the book, there is no separate entry of the word here*]

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